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ABSTRACT

As a part of the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education, the educational environments of schools in 2 Alaskan tundra villages, in a state-consolidated school in Bethel, and in Anchorage public schools were filmed to provide empirical evidence for the evaluation of Eskimo education. This film study was pointed toward ascertaining whether schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs are singularly different from other schools educating Indians. In addition, the film sample ranged from the most undisturbed environment to the most un-Eskimo environment in Alaska in an attempt to determine how the relative learning pace of children changed. Among the conclusions in the document, it is noted that there is little difference between the quality of BIA and state-operated schools; there is a need for a more culturally appropriate school curriculum and more relative subject matter; native teachers should be recruited; the number of community school programs should be increased; and there should be a restrengthening of the legal status of Eskimos with social rights and services from the Federal Government. (AL)

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The National Study of American Indian Education

FILM EVALUATION OF ESKIMO EDUCATION

USOE
No. OEC-0-8-080147-2805

Final Report

Series III. No. 4

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By

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June, 1970

RC004543

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians

The Final Report Series will be available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service after they have been announced in Research in Education. They will become available commencing in August, 1970, and the Series will be completed by the end of 1970.

FOREWORD

This report and evaluation of the education of Eskimo children in Alaskan schools has been made with motion picture film providing the basic data.

The National Study of American Indian Education was fortunate to have the interest and the services of John Collier, Jr. for this unique study.

Readers will enjoy the vigor and clarity of Professor Collier's writing style, and will appreciate his concern for the schools to meet the special educational needs of Alaskan Eskimos.

The conclusions and recommendations made by the author are his own responsibility, and have not yet been studied and integrated with the data from other sources. They will figure importantly in the final evaluation made by the National Study.

Robert J. Havighurst, Director
The National Study of American Indian Education

FILM EVALUATION OF ESKIMO EDUCATION

Research carried out by John Collier Jr.

School of Education and Department of Anthropology

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For the National Study on American Indian Education

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PREFACE

The U.S. Office of Education requested a national study of Indian education to examine native education wherever Indians were in classrooms. Six teams of observers were contracted to make this multi-focused correlated study to give a balanced description and assessment of American Indian education and to offer recommendations that all school systems could use to close the critical educational gap for the Indian minorities. Within the methodology of this survey, shared observations were to be made verbally and statistically. The film description was planned to give a balancing eyewitness first-hand view and an evaluation made directly from concrete visual circumstances within schools.

Field work was carried out in the spring of 1969. Working independently, I filmed samples of Eskimo schooling in two tundra villages in the valley of the Koskokwim in West Central Alaska. Next I filmed the State consolidated school in Bethel, the major trading center on the Koskokwim, where John Connelly, Project Director for the West Coast and Alaska, and field workers Ray and Carol Barnhardt were making the school survey for the National Study. Then I filmed classrooms in Alaska's largest city, Anchorage.

The film study was funded in part by the U.S. Office of Education, with supporting grants from the Research Institute for the Study of Man, The American Philosophical Society, and the Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research.

Initial analyses of the twenty hours of raw film data were made by Malcolm Collier, Mack Ford, Alyce Cathey, and Paul Michaels, all of whom have studied Visual Anthropology at San Francisco State College. John Collier made the final data analysis and wrote the final report in close collaboration with the research team.

This study is based on a small sample of educational characteristics. Some evidence was observed only in one class, and therefore we claim no statistical significance whatseever.

Our approach throughout has been illustrative, describing what happens in various classroom circumstances. The medium of our data is film, which allows very refined dissection of the educational moment. Based on our film data we have tried to write a precise account of how Eskimo children respond to education, and by orderly comparison of classes to present an ethnographic account of similar and contrasting school cultures.

The final writing of the report was preceded by saturated observation of each Eskimo class and hours of listening to classroom sound tapes.

Ideally this film account should be read in conjunction with John Connelly's team study of Eskimo education within the same region. This study adds the scope and depth of data which is necessarily missing from our eye- and ear-witness study. The film research was made objectively to support and illuminate the exhaustive verbal study made by John Connelly, and Ray and Carol Barnhardt.

Our conclusions blend both empirical and laboratory analysis of our data, and unquestionably also draw upon my general experience in Indian education.

John Collier Jr.

San Francisco State College
May 31, 1970

U.S.S.R
Kotzebu
Nome
St. Lawrence Is.
CANADA
Yukon River
Fairbanks
ALASKA
Bering Sea
Koskokwim River
Bethel
Anchorage
Koskokwin Bay
Juneau
Angoon
N

Map 1

Yukon river
Saint Mary's
Nunapitchuk
Tulu ksak
Bethel
Kwethluk
Koskowim river
0
50
Scale m.
N

Map 2

CHAPTER ONE

THE SETTING AND THE PROBLEM

I. Eskimos of the Koskokwim Region of Alaska

There are two distinct groups of Eskimos in Alaska -- those who live in the Arctic north of the Brooks Range, and those who live to the south fringing along the coast of the Bering Sea and into the interior on the lower Yukon and Koskokwim Rivers. Considering the isolation between the North and the South, these Eskimos share a lot in common, but they also have distinct differences. Though both groups speak Eskimo, their dialects are mutually unintelligible. Their ecology and life styles differ, and their history and experience of acculturation are in contrast.

The classic image of the Eskimo is the seal hunter, harpooner of whales, living directly on the Bering and Arctic Seas. But both southern and northern Eskimos also have groups living in the interior, hunting the caribou or fishing the rivers for salmon. The southern coastal Eskimos share in sealing and, historically, whaling; but before white contact they had migrated into the interior and established a distinct culture around salmon-fishing, berry-picking, and the hunting of deer, elk, and moose. Though the climate to the north of the Brooks Range, referred to as the "North Slope," is more severe and inhospitable than the semi-forested southern interior, it was the northern Alaskan Eskimos who had the first contact with white culture. Whalers radically affected the economies and style of the Bering Sea Eskimo early in the nineteenth century, whereas the salmon-fishing Eskimos of the interior

of the Koskokwim basin had little contact with westerners until the Moravian missionaries established a base at Bethel in 1884.

The effect of the Moravian missionaries was cultural rather than economic, and though the relation of the Eskimos to their ecology was little changed, their social and religious culture was in some ways more extremely affected than was that of the maritime Eskimos by the earlier white contact. Moravian influence destroyed much of the Eskimo life style, including music, dance, and inter-village social life. The giant village celebrations, loosely termed pot-latches, were stopped as being pagan, and in their place were established constant and compulsive Moravian Church activities.

As late as 1930 the physical style of Koskokwim life was fairly intact. Villages on the tundra consisted then of subterranean houses, whereas today all housing is made of logs, timber, or plywood. The Koskokwim seen from the air is mostly open tundra with multitudes of shallow lakes, with only a bare fringe of stunted spruce along the waterways. Farther inland the river settlements are on the edge of the forests, and log dwellings were built long before the tundra villagers emerged from their subterranean homes.

Survival has always been fitted into a circular calendar, where each month contains a fitting activity that relates to the next. The foundation of survival is the summer salmon fishing, to which all other things relate. Fishing in the summer makes survival in the spring possible. The culture is classically based on this relationship. Our report will describe conflicts that are directly related to the Eskimo circular concept of time as compared to the white school's linear time.

Though traditional economies have given way to government relief over the last few years, the historical problem of survival distributes the villages along the river ways. Hunting, fishing, and gathering limit practical

village size, and also space the village locations. Reaching from the Bering Sea to two-hundred-and-fifty miles into the interior are scattered many villages, each with its own school. These Eskimo centers range in size from fifty to three-hundred-and-fifty inhabitants. The schools contain from one to five rooms, and are taught by one to three couples, with or without children of their own. Hence white teachers may live in extreme isolation, with only Eskimos for day-to-day human contacts, or in a small compound forming their own society.

II. Areas Covered by the Research Sample

The film study began in Tuluksak, eighty miles from Bethel, where native economies were said to be the least disturbed. Tuluksak, with some one-hundred-and-fifty inhabitants, is one of the small Eskimo communities located on a tributary of the Koskokwim. It contains a tiny one-room native store, a post office, a Moravian church, a National Guard Armory (as do most of the other villages), and a very modern two-room, two-teacher school taught by a couple who have been six years in Tuluksak and twenty years in Alaska teaching for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Education began in Tuluksak thirty years ago, and the earlier building of the BIA school is intact, now the home of the Eskimo Moravian minister.

The second study was made in Kwethluk, one of the largest Eskimo river communities, located also on a tributary, about forty miles from Bethel. This village of some three-hundred-and-fifty inhabitants has two churches -- a large and ancient Russian Orthodox church that served three-quarters of the Eskimos, and a new smaller Moravian church that claimed a smaller congregation.

Both churches have Eskimo lay leaders. Kwethluk has a large, well-organized co-op store, a water system, and a light plant -- an unusual innovation at this time on the Koskokwim. Behind the Co-op is a commodious National Guard Armory. Across from the Orthodox Church is the very new, well-equipped, five-room BIA school, normally administered by three couples -- a principal and four teachers.

Close to Kwethluk there is a Moravian Children's Home, originally set up to accommodate children from Eskimo homes stricken with TB. Now it is an orphanage with a limited number of Eskimo students from nearby communities. There is a boys' dormitory and a girls' dormitory where the children are housed and instruction is carried on from the first through the eighth grade. This school was the only mission school in our film sample.

Bethel, with a population today of 2,500, was the first white settlement inland on the Koskokwim, the seat of the Moravian missionaries, a major hub of trade for all western Alaska, and the administrative center for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Bethel has a U.S. Public Health hospital and central administrative offices for the National Guard, the Alaska Fish and Game Commission, and the Civil Aeronautics Board. The Moravians have a large church which competes with Pentacostal, Baptist, and Catholic churches. The city has three large general stores and two nearly abandoned, earlier trading posts.

While I was filming in the village schools, John Connelly and Ray and Carol Barnhardt were surveying the Bethel consolidated school. I filmed through this school from kindergarten, picking up the sample covered by the National Study -- first, fifth, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades. The film

sample also included Special Education classes for retarded and deaf children.

The Bethel film study was a critical point between the remote villages and the city of Anchorage, over four-hundred air miles eastward, and was an evolutionary link between a large city school within Eskimo ecology as compared to city schools in Anchorage remote from Eskimo ecology or culture.

There are four-thousand Eskimos and Indians living in Anchorage; it is considered the largest native community in Alaska. One is aware of this on first landing by plane from the "lower forty-eight" states, but when the school system is observed, this reality of native population can be forgotten. The public schools of Anchorage appear no different from the public schools of a large California city. Actually there is much more ethnic diversity in the Oakland schools than one could find in Anchorage. I was told that seven percent of the children enrolled in school were native. Visually there were about three to a class. This means that native children -- Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut -- are going to schools that are essentially white.

In the public schools of Anchorage I filmed the same sample of classes I have covered in Bethel. This survey consumed eight days.

Meanwhile Connelly and the Barnhardts had moved on to Angoon in southeast Alaska, a Tlingit Indian fishing community, to survey their State-run community school. With two weeks of the school term left, I, too, flew to Angoon and made a film survey of both school and community. This material has no direct bearing on this Eskimo report, and we have not analyzed this footage, for it represents too limited a sample for comparable analysis. The film was made primarily for the team's regional study, which will be

made in the near future. Nevertheless, this material has influenced our judgment on Eskimo education, and the empirical experience will be described for the balance it may give to the Eskimo school picture.

III. What We Were Looking For

Much of the scandal over Indian education focuses on the supposed inferiority of BIA schools. Now that more Indians today are in public, state, and mission schools, this issue may be less significant. But it is vital to see whether, indeed, BIA schools <u>are</u> singularly different from <u>other</u> schools educating Indians. Though Alaska may not be representative of BIA educational programming, our film study was, among other things, pointed to ask this question: Is the fault of Indian education vested in BIA bureaucracy, or is the fault in schools in general?

Beyond this abrupt question, the film study was attempting to chart the human and educational behavior of Eskimo students on three evolving curves: an ecological-geographic curve, a cultural-ethnic distribution curve, and an age-cycle curve.

The film sample, ranging from the remote Eskimo village, to the larger more progressive village, to the tundra city salmon-fishing center, and finally to the white modern city of Anchorage, allowed the camera to watch how the relative learning pace of the children changed, from the most undisturbed environment to the most impersonal, un-Eskimo environment available in Alaska. Does school setting affect learning and emotional well-being? Are teachers less or more responsible to students' welfare as Eskimos in tiny village schools as compared to the city school environment in Anchorage?

Are changes of concern related to how teachers teach and how students learn? Is there real value in making sacrifices to teach in remote villages? Or is it educationally more successful to move Eskimo children into large centers with greater interaction and fuller educational advantages? Is environmental and cultural security really significant in native education?

The second curve followed the range of Eskimo children's response to the ethnic composition of the classroom, from the totally Eskimo schools in the villages to the predominantly Eskimo student body in Bethel, where 85 percent of the school children are Eskimo, and finally to the predominantly white schools in Anchorage, where only seven percent of the student body are native -- Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts. (In one class in the Bethel school, by chance, Eskimos represented only one-third of the attendance.) Is there a relationship between well-being and the ethnic content? Do Eskimos respond better within their own group? How do they respond as a small minority in the genuinely desegregated school? This insight might be very important in discussing the value of BIA education versus public school attendance. Should natives near white communities be bused out of their village schools into the stimulation of white schools? Or is the concept of the village ethnic community school one key to effective education for native children? Is there a relationship to the school drop-out rate in this ethnic distribution curve?

The third curve was an age cycle from Head Start to tenth grade. Where on this curve do the Eskimo children exhibit the most intensity in learning? At what grade or age point does the native child begin to show signs of alienation and stress? If native students exhibit stress at adolescence,

is this essentially physiological? Or is this stress also environmentally related? In the background of this query is, of course, the historical debate over boarding schools versus day schools and the contemporary debate over ethnically segregated schools versus desegregated schools.

Questions were also asked as to the value of natively relevant material in the curriculum, the value of bilingualism, and the possible educational empathy of native teachers versus imported Caucasian teachers. Our film sample included instances of these elements. Along with charting the three curves of environment, ethnic distribution, and age cycles in native learning, we have evaluated on a very small sample the effect of relevant curriculum and the impression of native teachers in terms of relevance and communication.

From a still-photograph record, as well as the film record, the visual material of the curriculum has been inventoried and will be incorporated into the character of Eskimo education. Our combined evidence will support observations of the goals of Eskimo education and the character of educational programming for Eskimo children.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY OF THE FIELD WORK

I. Why Use Film?

In what way does film contribute to the general research?

First, we look at the returns of our colleagues, who make their statements mostly from the study of questionnaires and scheduled interviews. This brings in data on one level, and final interpretations rest on highly abstracted evidence, the speculative verbal statement -- speculative, because words are abstract mind signals that are recovered within a wide range of meaning, first within the native's response, and later in a researcher's interpretation. The data must be seen always over a communication chasm of words.

Film documentation is nonverbal, hence at many points less speculative and more open to critical judgment by a team of analysts. It is, in this sense, a very low level of documentary abstraction that is as sensual as it is intellectual, and therefore offers the analyst emotional-psychological opportunities difficult to research from verbal projections.

But why not still-photographic recording, which would be both cheaper and less cumbersome within the field circumstance?

Fifteen years of experiment have fixed reasonable limits of still-photographic evidence. The still camera does a fine job of inventorying what is there. It counts and measures responsibly. But it has serious limitations when motion is of a major research importance. True, one can

make voluminous time-and-motion scheduled, still-photographic studies, but both making and analyzing these studies become extremely awkward and more time consuming than the film record. Time-and-motion records of the still camera are fixed points of human phenomena. Projectively the mind must link behavior together between these fixed points. The result tends to be a gross assumption or to be impressionistic in judgment. Film flows photographically and links all time stations without impressionism, and therefore allows for authentic observation of motion.

Our colleagues in the National Study are getting the fixed facts. We hope film will offer the emotional flow between facts and allow us to discuss genuinely the emotional-psychological behavior of the child in education.

Our decision to research with film is based on advanced studies by anthropologists and psychologists concerned with nonverbal behavior. We thank pioneers in visual anthropology for much of our methodology. Edward T. Hall formally introduced us to the cultural opportunities of film analysis. He demonstrated vividly on film with slow-motion projection of three culturally different groups of people at a fiesta -- Indians, Spanish-Americans, and Anglos -- how each moved consistently within a program of behavior which was totally synchronized within each group. Could we make a similar record in classrooms and thereby describe school culture from nonverbal behavior?

Paul Byers of Columbia has also carried nonverbal recordings into analysis of group behavior. Byers has demonstrated that people in any cultural circumstance are consistently programmed in their use of space and body expression. (See Mead and Byers, The Small Conference, 1968.)

We have used Hall's concept of proxemics, space in culture, and we have been constantly grateful to Ray Birdwhistell for his studies in kinesics, the significance of body posture. Birdwhistell analyzed two minutes of film made by Gregory Bateson of a disturbed mother and child, and through kinesics was able to diagnose accurately a state of psychiatric stress. Film appears able to document emotional stress and well-being; and this opportunity has been a major objective in our research.

Paul Ekman, in association with Langley Porter Clinic in San Francisco, has also carried out many years of study in psychiatric nonverbal behavior and stabilized film reading to a point where Langley Porter can use film responsibly in diagnosis.

Finally, as is inevitable in visual anthropology, we are indebted to Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson for laying the cornerstones that have made the studies of nonverbal behavior a reality in anthropology. Balinese Character offered us many clues to making and analyzing our film research.

II. Research Design

The goal of our methodology was to record in a design that would correlate with the National Study. As stated, we covered the same sample of classes but broadened this coverage by filming early childhood education as well -- Head Start, kindergarten, pre-first, and Special Education classes -- all of which we felt very important in considering Indian education. The design of our study was to gather systematically film samples so that class to class, school to school, we could search for the same behavior variables and produce a conclusion that would represent the impact and significance of twenty hours of classroom film.

III. Technical Considerations

How to make this film record? Should we use conventional 16mm film? Or should we use Super 8mm film, which is considered an amateur medium? This question was answered immediately by the budget. Sixteen-millimeter would skyrocket the cost of our research. To achieve relevance we would have to make many hours of film. The Super 8 image is satisfactorily sharp. The cost of a Super 8 camera that would allow us to make time lapse studies was relatively low. So was the cost of a projector designed to study time lapse, frame-for-frame (the Eastman Ektomatic Super 8 projector). Also, processing costs thousands of dollars in 16 mm. In many ways it was a hard photographic decision to make, for almost surely it would limit our film to research only; to date it is extremely difficult to produce audience film with Super 8.

The next decision was how much to film. Considering the breadth of our sample we budgeted three rolls per class, two rolls at the conventional eighteen frames per second and one roll at automatic time lapse at two frames per second. This offered two varieties of recovery. The first was about nine minutes of film time devoted to long sequences following both general and specific activities, usually shot within a half hour. The second was a systematic exaggeration of body motion that made behavior patterns easy to see. Two frames per second, projected at four or six frames per second, literally dissects body expression. Time lapse also allows for rapid frame-for-frame analysis for refined measure of kinesic, proxemic, and time factors.

IV. How the Films Were Made

Ideally, I chose a location where all of the students and teachers were in view. The camera was usually on a tripod, and before filming there was a time period allowed for teacher and students to adjust to the camera presence. Usually halfway through the filming the camera could be removed from the tripod and I could wander about the room when relevant material was not clearly seen from the initial position. The camera had a zoom lens so that individual behavior could be filmed intimately without moving the camera. Slow pans were used to keep in track all behavior in the class.

V. STILL Photographic Recording

After the filming, an inventory of classrooms was made with the 35 mm still camera. Still records can document detail of walls and teaching materials with more precision than the moving picture camera and offer an easier analysis opportunity than film.

VI. Sound Recording

The final decision of technique was in relation to sound recording. Lip synchronization was technically, as well as financially, out of the question. It would have required many thousands of dollars' worth of equipment and the constant presence of a sound technician. But sound synchronized for content was thoroughly practical. Therefore every class filmed was sound logged with a SONY tape recorder. This was the only documentary way that behavior and curriculum could be correlated. Also, the noise level

could be related to teaching method. The recorder was left in a central position in the class and allowed to run through the entire time involved in the filming.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EMPIRICAL FIELD EXPERIENCE

I. The Photographer as Participant Observer

The act of taking pictures is a complete experience in itself, just as the making of a survey, apart from its data, reveals many aspects of the field circumstance.

My first impression was that teachers and principals are much more prepared to answer questions than to appear before the camera. The verbal examination can be more controlled and directed by the informant toward a desired impression. Question answering is often from an armored position, and therefore tolerable.

The nonverbal examination is harder to control, especially if it goes on continuously. Hence schools are at first agitated over the request to film them. "Why?", "What for?", "Who will see the film?" are immediate queries that must be answered. But once such hurdles had been crossed, 90 percent of the teachers were relaxed and pretty much ignored my presence in their rooms. I am not saying they forgot that I was there. Rather, each teacher is so programmed in behavior that during an hour's visit it seemed difficult, or even psychologically impossible, to change his pattern fundamentally. Hence poor teachers continued on their negative programs, and good teachers continued turning students on in a relaxed way that made me feel unseen.

Every student seemed familiar with photography and film, and they often showed a keen interest in the process. They were allowed to look through the camera and to ask questions. But they, too, settled rapidly into an established classroom pattern of being teacher-bored, sleepy, distracted, or interacting with excitement to the lesson. My presence in all but a few cases seemed neither to add nor to distract. Maybe this is a quality of film, for it flows on with time, on the same time river that is carrying the students to freedom at the class' end. The still camera takes a slice out of time, and can both interrupt and distort behavior for this reason.

II. Observing in the BIA Village Schools as Compared with State-Run Schools

Working through the Superintendent of the State of Alaska's Consolidated Elementary and High School in the tundra city of Bethel was a very different circumstance from visiting isolated BIA village schools. The State school superintendent was verbally concerned about how his teachers would respond to the filming, but bureaucratically he was in control of their cooperation, and with varying degrees of interest the teachers dutifully collaborated.

To work in the Village school was at the prerogative of the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Director of Education for the Koskokwim schools. In some ways my request for film observation was more threatening to the BIA than to the State school system. Once the Bethel superintendent adjusted to my presence and to the observations of Connelly and the Barnhardts, he was enthusiastically opportunistic, for he recognized that we wished a complete and honest picture that might realistically benefit the school. After a month, he saw us, in a sense, as collaborators rather than as spies. The State

school system is expanding rapidly in Alaska and is success oriented. The BIA school system is shrinking, is under attack, and therefore is extremely sensitive to any observation.

A major anxiety suggested by the BIA superintendent as to why filming would be difficult was the predictable tension in the isolated schools. I was told that the teachers did not welcome visitors (contrary to the human assumption that they would like a break in their monotony), and that they were usually too harassed and busy with school affairs to be able to work with a visitor. I was given the impression that thousands of miles out on the tundra wastes teachers were harassed by hostile or wasteful studies, and therefore not always hospitable. Further, and of course logically, there simply were no accommodations except in the teachers' own homes. Indeed, everything is short in the wilderness. Supplies of all kinds must be purchased a year ahead. Because teachers are apparently besieged with senators and educators making surveys, the usual Anchorage prices should be paid for hospitality -- $15 a night and $3 a meal were permissible prices for visiting observers. Yet each teacher accommodated visitors on his own terms -- humanly established between teacher and field worker.

The Area director was sincerely concerned about the psychological welfare of his field staff. Talking things over in a cement radar personnel site converted to a BIA nerve center of welfare and education, I got the message that life in the remote village school was a hazardous assignment and the turnover of personnel high. Nothing must happen that would upset the precarious equilibrium of the isolated teachers. I left by bush plane for the villages with the feeling that I was entering an explosive assignment.

III. Isolation and Survival Culture

The Koskokwim Basin in winter appears as coils of frozen waterways and lakes fringed with stunted black spruce and willows. In the southeast there are glistening mountains, but west and north the tundra wastes slope to the horizon. In this vastness, a village is sighted close to waterways -- a scattering of cabins, a shimmering metallic school compound, a National Guard Quonset hut. Villages can be fifteen air-minutes, thirty, or forty air-minutes from Bethel, eight hours or twenty-four hours by dog sled, two or four hours by gasoline-driven Sno-Go.

Villages range in size from fifty to two-hundred-and-fifty Eskimos, who only a few years ago lived off the wilderness -- salmon-fishing and berry-picking in summer; rabbit-snaring, deer, elk, and moose hunting, and fur-trapping in winter. The salmon still remain a major foundation, but old-age pensions, relief, and National Guard stipends have become the economic way of life, especially through the long winters. Every year fewer Eskimos endure the rigors of the winter hunting-camps and beaver trap lines.

As the bush plane skims over the river ice, low between river banks, one's first impression is that public health has come to the Arctic, for the most imposing structures are the multitudes of neatly painted white outhouses. The second impression is of the barking sled dogs staked out by the privies, and then of the Eskimos who gather to watch the mail plane skid to a halt below the diminutive village post office. The mail sled skids down the bank, pushed by laughing children followed by elders, some dressed in Army high-altitude flying gear, others in traditional wolf-fringed parkas. The Eskimos like visitors. They are amused and curious

about strangers and eager to make them welcome -- a normal response, we humanly assume, to life in great isolation. Travelers have always agreed that Eskimos are very social folk.

I have observed, on the contrary, that white people of status (and most white people come with status) dropped on contract assignments into the moist, green isolation of tropical jungles or dropped into the white isolation of the Arctic, often respond to the circumstance by creating further isolation by walling themselves off both from the ecology and from the native humanity around them.

White school teachers in native schools face this dilemma. Some of the walls that rise around them are self-fulfilling conflicts of culture, strengthened by the bureaucratic and technological zeal of a government agency. By white standards, Eskimo villages are pitifully poor, unhygienic, and shockingly overcrowded, with two families jammed into one small log cabin ten feet by twenty. As in any survival economy, per capita income would be far below even the conventional poverty line if relief and government succor were removed.

Abruptly, in the midst of all this apparent squalor and staked-out sled dogs, stands the BIA school compound. Its life pulse is its diesel light plant, which makes the compound a mecca of blazing illumination in the darkness of the village. (Two villages now have their own light plants.) By day the BIA buildings shimmer in aluminum and fresh paint. Nothing has been spared to make these units ideal models of white mastery, technology, and comfort. On the one hand, the excellence of the buildings speaks for the drive of the curriculum; on the other, the technology and

comforts are essential for the emotional well-being of the staff. The comfortable life style of the teachers' home culture is imported, indeed refined upon, to make life tolerable in the Arctic isolation.

I am sure these comforts do make life tolerable on one level, but on another they greatly increase the isolation. Teachers exist within this comfort style and rarely go outside its walls -- except to hunt, which is the one ecologically oriented outlet for male teachers in the villages.

To live within such small space requires great skills in self-fulfillment and high tolerance to human shortcomings. The shock of the circumstance, too, often weakens both these skills. Marriages crack, and contracts are broken. The one skill that most field personnel develop highly is the skill of keeping busy. Fortunately the bureaucracy of the BIA cooperates in this, for if all the forms and receipts are filled out regularly, if radio communications are kept and duly logged, there is literally little time for any other activity. But the busy-ness becomes another wall of isolation, not only from the community and the ecology, but also from wanting to have visitors observing their operations. Indeed, once inside the educational compound, it is difficult to set up after-school interviews with teachers; they are too busy or they are exhausted.

Behind this inaccessibility there are, of course, other real challenges of individual survival. Quite realistically, to keep air space and peace within the limited and nigh impenetrable walls of the compound (winter temperatures hover for days at fifty below zero), personal privacy must be religiously respected. Under the stress and multiple culture shock, holding together as a person in this isolation is indeed a challenge. Too often,

self-survival is sought with introversion and further imposed isolations that resent the arrival of strangers.

Well-being anywhere is obtained in a complex scheme of resources. When Eskimos move to San Francisco this struggle for adjustment can be viewed in reverse. One Eskimo we observed in Oakland was unable to transplant himself. He worked, came home, sat in a compulsively neat but empty house, with no ties with the surrounding community, and drank himself into a psychiatric disaster that required that he be shipped back to the Arctic. Clearly the success of such transplants depends on the ability to transport sufficient life style so that minimal well-being can be retained. When a familiar diet is broken and new foods rejected, a "crack up" in personality can take place. For most teachers a contract in the Arctic is an abrupt interruption of normal life that will not begin again until they return to the "lower forty-eight." This is as true among teachers in the State system at Bethel as in the village schools of the BIA. Busy-ness is an anesthetic that certainly helps many through the Arctic winter. But this tends to be a frantic solution unless other outlets and relationships are achieved.

IV. Relating to the Arctic

The primary basis on which many teachers relate to the Arctic is linked to their reason for deciding to come to work with the Eskimos in the first place. Some come for adventure. But others come out of a real concern for the advertized deprivation of the Eskimo. The well-fed hold out a hand to the hungry. Modern man brings aid to primitive peoples -- a missionary zeal that contains empathy but also a severe sense of inequality. They come

north to help the Eskimo. Few come north to learn. And, too, many others come north for the money. Again, this is a general view of white teachers in the Arctic.

The motivated teachers of Eskimos approach their tasks with enthusiasm. But as the year passes, enthusiasm may too often change to a fatalism about the hopelessness of the task of educating the Eskimo within his life and habitat. For many the very cultural style of their students' families is a block against education. Villagers can appear to lack progressive motivation. Indeed, Eskimos can appear lazy and improvident, because they often do not find white goals of much value. For too many motivated teachers, the year's contract ends in negative discouragement.

The adventure-oriented teacher, usually male, often does relate to Eskimo survival skills in hunting and fishing. Alaska is a man's world, and though sports-oriented teachers retain well-being, their solution is usually outside the village and does not necessarily direct their teaching. Nor does it occur to them to adjust school-attendance scheduling so that Eskimo children could learn these skills also. Other Arctic-oriented teachers become collectors: Eskimo masks, mukluks, valuable furs, and exquisite parkas. But this interest in Eskimo artifacts, again, does not necessarily reach out to the Eskimo villagers or weave into classroom activity in terms of a culturally involved curriculum.

The few career teachers who stay for many years in the Arctic are the exception. For these unusual people school busy-ness may be replaced by deeper involvements. Real friendships are formed in the villages. Individual teachers in the past have been very influential in developing cooperatives

and starting light plants in the villages. These lasting teachers are not so driven. On film they appear relaxed and generally live a human leisurely pattern.

One such teacher is a pilot, owns his own plane, and visits up and down the Koskokwim. His wife is adept in first-aid and generously directs an Eskimo village health worker. A circumstance that may be a key to their "lasting" is their philosophical view of their jobs. Generally they keep educational goals low, or "real," in keeping with their aspirations for the Eskimo villagers. This view can become a fatalism, reinforced by years of experience, that closes the door on radical innovation. This philosophical view allows them genuinely to like the Eskimos, but at the same time precludes their envisioning anything but a limited horizon for these villagers unless they leave. These teachers have another great value: they stay, which is in itself educational. They have been a stimulation to students to reach the goals <u>they</u> feel are practical and progressive for the Eskimo. But it is precisely because of goals of this nature that American Indian education is now under grave question.

These observations are not directed solely toward a special BIA culture, but, as stated earlier, toward white people contracted to work in wilderness isolation. The State of Alaska is taking more and more of the schools over from the BIA, and it is hard to imagine that circumstances would be radically different for State teachers. Basically I am describing the teacher environment of isolated Eskimo schools taught by culturally different white teachers. My observations are directed toward how this compound culture affects education. Furthermore, I am not describing a situation that is wholly predestined and not subject to change; indeed, if it were, the substance of this report would be futile.

V. Eskimo Children

Eskimo children must be the most rewarding kids in the world to teach. This is one's immediate response to any Eskimo classroom in an isolated village. There is enough Eskimo life style left to retain the traditional personality. Will this change if the survival culture of the Arctic environment is radically eroded by intrusive technology and dollars for work unrelated to the ecology? As of now, the Eskimo children are remarkably stable and optimistic, eager for innovation and knowledge of the world.

One rarely meets dour looks or difficult dispositions in the elementary grades. Poor teaching skills and dull curriculum are yet not enough to dampen their spontaneity. They are apparently easy to lead and very cooperative. We have records of teachers who have capitalized on this opportunity; but in general, teachers in the villages make instruction hard work, apply themselves with compulsive intensity, and appear exhausted after a class period. You sense how hard it is for them to reach over to the Eskimo children from their own isolation. They appeared to be shouting lessons over a great gulf -- and in the film there was considerable air distance as well as emotional distance between teachers and pupils.

Generally instruction was highly verbal with little feedback from the students. They sat dutifully in class, amazingly intent upon the teachers' words, or else quietly squirming, yawning, and stretching. Was this because of a language block? Was their English even more limited than the teachers realized? Would they have communicated in Eskimo? Or did the teaching style limit verbal feedback?

VI. The Educational Impact of the BIA Compound in the Villages

The total presence of the BIA school -- its compound, staff, and technology -- provides its educational impact on the village. As observed, the school plant is a model of white perfection which constantly contrasts with the tattered and weather-beaten Eskimo habitations. Each school has its maintenance workshop and ultra modern diesel light plant that runs continuously. Each school has a kitchen and a multi-purpose room where hot lunches are served or BINGO games held for the village on special evenings. The kitchen staff wear uniforms and waitress type hats and observe ultra-hygienic routines.

The children's lives are spent running to the brightly lighted, windowed school with all its technology, and back home again over the snow or mud to small, dark, not too hygienic, native homes.

The educational staff of the village school is not limited to white teachers. Each school has an Eskimo teacher's aide and one, or sometimes as many as three, Eskimo maintenance and janitorial assistants, and an Eskimo kitchen staff. The native staff members are elite villagers, skilled in white ways and considered intelligent and dependable. Also these Eskimo staff jobs may be the only cash employment available in the village and give the holders high status roles in the community.

The educational role of the teacher's aide is clear. Occasionally she sits down with a group of children in the lower grades and corrects their spelling or math. A lot of the time she stands, far away from the teacher, and waits for an order or a chance to be of service -- finding the pointer, the chalk, the blackboard eraser, or handing out dittoed forms to students.

Even in these modest services I am sure these aides are invaluable, if only for their ability to put the children at ease in Eskimo. What other educational functions these young women could be put to is a question to be examined later in our text.

The educational role of the various male Eskimo assistants is considerably more vague. Whatever their influence is, it is benign and most informal. As stated, they are highly selected personnel, educated in technology and adequate, if not fluent, in reading and writing. They are usually village leaders and belong to the National Guard. Could they be used to teach industrial arts and practical education and to be rewarding adult figures of educational success? In a related way, what further educational role could the kitchen staff offer the school?

VII. A Village OEO Head Start Class

In the village of Kwethluk, a few hundred yards from the BIA compound, there is a contrasting school culture, the Head Start program financed by the Office of Economic Opportunity. For the Eskimos this is the village school, and the BIA is the government school.

The village Head Start is held in the commodious planked council chamber of the village, and every service of this school is carried out by the village, including the instruction. Two young women of the village with BIA high school education and a summer's workshop in Fairbanks teach five-year-old Eskimo children the rudiments of Mother Goose, English, and alphabet recognition. I suspect the class is far ahead of where early childhood education is supposed to be, but this village school is taught by alert and ambitious Eskimo women with a high regard for their pupils.

The OEO Head Start program is directed from Bethel by a traveling director, herself an Eskimo from this very village, who flies a circuit of village schools eighty miles in all directions from Bethel. Most of the time the young teachers are on their own, and so the school operates on its own level.

The principal at the neighboring BIA school was suspicious that all they did was in Eskimo, but when I played him a tape from Head Start he was amazed and impressed by the school's effectiveness in teaching English.

Viewed on film the school is very different from the BIA, and it is clear why this school made such progress. In the BIA pre-first as well as in the kindergarten at Bethel, there is a great deal of space between pupils and teachers. In this Head Start class, communication is body to body, and there is a current of communication running from teacher to students and back to teacher. The effect of this communication is clearly seen on film.

The BIA teachers are white and come and go. The Head Start teachers are kin to most of the children. Though English is used heavily in Head Start, it is easy to lapse into Eskimo whenever appropriate. This Head Start class was our one model of the effectiveness of native teachers with minimal education. This circumstance will be examined again in our conclusions.

VIII. A Moravian Mission Home and School

A variation from the school compound culture was the world of the Moravian Children's Home three miles from Kwethluk. The Home was established

originally to accommodate Eskimo children from families stricken by TB. Now that TB is no longer the scourge that it was, the home is for any child who needs care and education. A church and three commodious two-story lodges are strung through a clearing of stunted spruce on a bend of a tributary of the Koskokwim. Through the summer, boats and barges stop at the Home, while in winter planes land on the ice, and dog sled and Sno-Go link the Home with the post office downstream in Kwethluk.

Isolation is nearly complete, except for daily contact with the Home's Eskimo population. Here there is no village nor any opportunity to interact with the ecology except to be surrounded by it. Whereas in the villages the school hours tend to be culturally separated from native life, here you find the school one large family with intense interaction between everyone around the clock.

The missionary commitment of Moravian personnel makes for continuity. Few leave, and many stay to retirement. The religious activity largely takes care of well-being and insists on at least an outwardly loving social relationship. As a missionary center, both Home and school are relaxed. The children seem spontaneously happy, and most of the human problems met in the compounds are solved by the Moravian culture of the Home. I am sure not all missionary schools achieve this relative harmony; and it is a question just what this Home offers in functioning education for Eskimos.

There is no overt culture conflict, simply because the children are lifted totally from their own culture and submerged in the school. The extreme isolation makes everyone functionally dependent on everyone else. By comparison the BIA schools are in the mainstream of Arctic travel. Mail

planes stop twice a week, and all day long bush planes are roaring in and out. The daily radio "skid" from Bethel holds each school in the bureaucracy. But the Moravian Home is "unto itself."

Compared to the BIA schools, education at the Home is limited to the three R's and vocational training such as typing. The plant is poor but stable, unequipped but severely thorough.

The school appeared to welcome visitors, and the director was eager to talk over the psychological problems of its charges. The question arises, can such a mission school innovate to the bicultural needs of its students? Moravian missionaries initially took a very hostile view of Eskimo culture, and the summer school for Eskimo village lay readers still instructs against Eskimo culture in the form of dancing or traditional social life. Religious attendance in one village was fanatically compulsive, and the church program appeared not to concern itself with the survival problems of the community, such as building a cooperative, encouraging Arctic skill, etc. One gets the impression that even here in the human warmth of the Home, orientation is <u>out</u> of the Arctic. The general education offered is in conflict with the life style of even the contemporary Eskimo. Looking out from the Home, the villages hardly exist. On the other hand Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, seat of the Moravian church, is critically in focus.

IX. <u>The Tundra City of Bethel</u>

What kind of education do Eskimos receive from this busy hub of the Arctic? The school in Bethel is excellent as measured in white values -- as are the BIA village schools, as well. But here the school is an appendage of the city, Bethel.

Bethel as a school for Eskimos might be compared to Gallup as a school for Navajos. A liquor store pays the town's upkeep. And even though almost everyone agrees that this one liquor store is the scourge of all Eskimos living in or visiting Bethel, in the last election the store was voted permanence -- for it pays. Some years ago it had been voted closed, with a sigh of relief, but the loss of revenue was too severe.

Beyond the liquor store are three richly stocked general stores to tempt the Eskimo further in his tastes for conspicuous consumption, as well as waste.

Bethel has a genuine slum, poor as shoddy cabins only can be when shadowed by affluence. So in one sense Bethel is the world that the white man's education is selling to the Eskimo. And as a world it has most of the white man's failures. Bethel could be looked upon as a proving ground for coping with white ways and perversities. Hence it could be a very educational spot.

The Alaska State School in Bethel appears aloof from this larger classroom, the city, even though its Superintendent is aware and resentful that this is so. Education in the Bethel school should be measured by how well it educates Eskimos to deal with our failures, such as alcoholism, negative socialization, and waste. It should also be judged in terms of how it prepares and encourages Eskimos to deal with their immediate social and political survival. This writing will examine some of these educational goals further on in the text.

Eskimos themselves may be using Bethel at large as a school far more effectively than they use the State school. Bethel is the site of the most militant co-op and the center for the most politically determined Eskimo

group in the tundra. Villagers from nearby Nunapitchuk form the backbone of the salmon cooperative based in Bethel and are the leading group in the Alaskan Native Association. Interestingly, a BIA teacher in this village was involved in motivating this rise in political self-determination, and a BIA teacher married to an Eskimo was a ringleader in organizing the fishing co-op. The cooperative was given national news coverage when Hickel, then Governor of Alaska, under pressure from canneries in Seattle tried illegally to break it. When we consider the State school, we cannot ignore this very educating experience of the Eskimo cooperative.

X. Anchorage, Alaska's Big City

Anchorage is a boom town. It romantically likes to think of its boom as the derring-do of the Goldrush. Driving around Anchorage is more reminiscent of real estate developments around Seattle and the petty exploitation of millions of American dollars dumping inflation on the Arctic.

For the Eskimos, Anchorage is just a city, and they are in the minority as they would be in any city in the "lower forty-eight." Five thousand Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos live in Anchorage. Seven percent of the school population is native. The Superintendent of Elementary Education suggests that actual school attendance represents only a part of the native population of school age. He claims that many children are not in school at all because natives find the schools painful and unfriendly. This reflects clearly the fact that the public schools are not for Eskimos or other natives. Education here is the most conventional white urban education, just as Anchorage city life is white urban society.

Overtones from our film suggest that we are looking at native education in any middle-sized American city. Actually in Anchorage there is a lower percentage of non-white students than would be found in many American city schools today. There is a very small Black population in Anchorage and an even smaller Oriental community, so that Anchorage might be expected to be less sophisticated about educating ethnic minorities than many other American cities. Though Anchorage has the largest native community in Alaska, this fact appears to have little or no effect on programming in the schools.

Possibly this is the educational tragedy of Alaska. Statistically the Eskimos are a very small group of people. They have as yet little political power. Only since the oil strike on the North Slope have their interests been an issue in Alaskan affairs. When viewing the Anchorage school film, it is hard to realize that this is Alaska. Even more than Bethel, Anchorage is the American experience. We can look at natives in school here as affected by very much the same circumstances as in Oakland, Seattle, or Spokane. The simple fact is that Anchorage really is a small American city. Its schools present a fair picture of natives in school attendance anywhere in the country.

XI. Angoon, Tlingit Indian Fishing Community

The film study in this southeast Alaska native community is valuable because it gives meaning to the behavior of Indian students in the Anchorage schools. Class for class in Anchorage there appeared to be more Indian students than Eskimo.

One cannot resist the temptation to observe that Indians and Eskimos are different people. For one thing, they seem to handle stress differently. We know from mental health studies that Eskimos can be subject to strong neuroses and traditionally have a high suicide rate. Their life style and their ecological circumstances involve more danger and personal hardships than one can find in the tranquil forested islands of southeast Alaska. Yet Indians appear to project stress more visibly than Eskimos, both verbally and nonverbally. Does this mean that Eskimos have had to develop more circumstantial control over their emotions? At any rate in the Anchorage schools Indian students exhibited clearer signs of stress.

The Tlingit fishing village of Angoon is located on an island in the Inside Passage a half hour's flight southwest from Juneau and a half hour east of Sitka. The island is a bear sanctuary; there are sixteen-hundred bears and four-hundred people. Except for Angoon the island is a heavily forested wilderness. Ceremonially Angoon means "the cave of the bear"; a large stone bear totem stands on the hill above the village.

In Angoon the village flowed as one family. In contrast Eskimo communities on the Koskokwim, though built in a close pattern, seemed to have more air space between personalities. Eskimos related intensely within families but more impersonally in the community at large. In Angoon on pleasant days it seemed that the whole village spent a great deal of time promenading from one end of the street to the other. Though there were three churches in Angoon, villagers tended to go from one church to another depending on what was going on. All this gave the village a strong family -- or was it tribal? -- feeling, where life and destiny were very much interrelated.

Here there could be a strong culture for a community school, with everyone helping each other. I believe I am writing of a potential, not an actuality. Though eighth-grade graduation was heavily attended, there did not seem a very strong interaction between school and community.

Originally Angoon had a BIA school with its traditional compound, but now it has a State school with its compound. But this compound-school-plant culture did not set the school apart nearly as much as in the Eskimo villages. Angoon is a thoroughly acculturated Indian community with a fairly affluent base, fishing for salmon in ten-thousand-dollar diesel seiners. Though this activity only lasts for three months in the summer, it is basically a cash operation, not a subsistence pattern, as is the salmon fishing on the Koskokwim. Houses are spacious and well equipped with conveniences. Indeed some homes have a pot-latch splendor that speaks of the primeval affluence of these island Indians, the Tlingit, and their relatives to the south, the Kwakiutl. This affluent and acculturated life style should make the school very central to the community.

There was one Indian teacher in the school from a fishing community to the south. His wife instructed Head Start with assistance from the village. The rest of the teaching staff were all from the "lower forty-eight." They differed from the usual run of BIA teachers in that they had little stake in educating Indians. Indeed, they seemed oblivious of the fact that their students were Indians, and they were teaching in Angoon for a host of reasons not related to native education.

In contrast, BIA village teachers on the Koskokwim were painfully aware that their students were Eskimos, and many suffered degrees of shock

at the Arctic isolation of the villages. The State teachers in Angoon were suffering boredom from lack of shock; neither ecology nor Indian culture reached them. Life in Angoon was benign (though an Indian woman tried to stab herself to death while we were there). The landscape is gentle and sheltering, the weather mild. You get the sense that the school ran itself with the minimal effort of the principal and staff. The very cooperative manner of the parents and children required no effort, and therefore the tempo in the school was slack, and education a drowsy culture.

It seems reasonable to compare the Angoon Head Start with the Kwethluk Head Start. However, they do not compare, except that both are very much carried out by the community. The first difference was the teacher. Though an Indian by descent, she was only remotely Indian by culture. She was not a village girl but a woman of forty-odd years with a teaching credential. Angoon was but a short flight from Juneau and Sitka. There were a lot of comings and goings; and the Head Start seemed under the tight thumb of the Juneau office. The teacher seemed compulsively trying to meet standards; and though a very warm person, she seemed remote from her students as compared with the Eskimo Head Start teachers. The class was held in a large community meeting hall with a well-equipped kitchen designed to feed whole village gatherings. Many women came in to help, without somehow making the school truly a village project, despite the village's appearance of relaxed togetherness.

I feel that a major difference was the fact that Eskimo Kwethluk was much less confused about its cultural identity than the acculturated village of Angoon. The cold breath of the Arctic gave the Kwethluk school a

sense of village importance that was not felt in Angoon. The teachers were traditional Eskimos and unquestionably had a different life view gained from their isolation than the women in Angoon from their more acculturated world involvement.

The Head Start class, like the State school, could be and should be a very dynamic community enterprise. I feel an ambivalence toward their own traditions sapped both these schools of vitality.

Was the more benign ecological life-circumstance of Indian villages such as Angoon in some way related to the Indian children's freer overt expression of their stress in the Anchorage schools? With my limited contact, I can not answer this question beyond observing how dramatically different are the life styles in these two environments, the islands of southeastern Alaska and the tundra villages on the Koskokwim.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ANALYSIS

1. Reading the Educational Importance in Film

How were we to analyze twenty hours of film? Frame-for-frame study on the order of Birdwhistell's and Hsmm's work could take four years. Instead we had to design a study of controlled judgments by a team of trained observers. Slow motion and frame-for-frame relationships could be afforded only at key points of significance.

Members of the team have all studied or are studying visual anthropology and share a background of cross-cultural understanding. One is a Eurasian with several years teaching experience, who is currently teaching English as a Second Language to Chinese children in San Francisco. One has taught several years in Head Start, including one year in northeastern Alaska. One is a master's candidate in anthropology with research experience in education and photography. One is an anthropology major with years of life among indigenous people and experience as a photographer.

In operationalizing our analysis we found it essential to state explicitly how education could be seen on film. Preliminary study indicated that communication is visibly apparent in the classes that the judges felt

were educationally alive. Minus and plus qualities in communication appeared the most significant factors. We found it important to agree on one major assumption to simplify the tremendous overload invariably present in the photographic document and help us develop a view that would lead to an agreed conclusion.

Assumption: Education is a communication process — from teacher to student, from student to teacher, between student and student, and between the student and himself.

Corollary: From viewing film we cannot tell whether education is taking place, but we might be able to tell circumstantially if education could take place, and be reasonably sure of the circumstances in which education is not taking place.

(An analogy of the visible proof within the model: If telephone wires are seen entering a house we can assume that messages might be sent or received; if telephone wires are dangling, unattached to the house, we can safely assume there is no longer telephone communication.)

II. Nonverbal Variables That Support Concrete Observation

We studied our footage as film, only occasionally studying behavior frame for frame. Hence our variables primarily are in motion, and much of our qualified observation was seen in the sequence of time. Hence time itself was a variable.

We tried to standardize non-verbal communication patterns so that we could recognize behavioral elements in a comparable way. Though film offers special subtleties visible only in film, the basic elements for non-verbal research in still images are very similar to those in film. These tangible elements are of three dimensions:

Birdwhistell's KINESICS -- the language of posture and gesture;
Hall's PROXEMICS -- the language of space; and the
FLOW OF TIME as a measure of duration of human performance and
the validity of behavior seen only through repetition in time.

A fourth element is the comparability between classrooms, which offers a most important descriptive opportunity.

Examples of Communication in the Classroom

1) TEACHER SENDING:

Kinesics: Gestures of message projection
Eye messages, hand messages, body posture messages
Visual display of artifacts that communicate

Proxemics: Space between teacher and student as a communication variable

Space adjustment as an effort in communication

Extreme proximity for one-to-one projection

Touching the listener, body-to-body communication

STUDENT RECEIVING:

Kinesics: Eye reception, attention, focus

Body reception--turning toward sender, leaning toward sender

Proxemics: Space adjustment to improve reception

Touching the teacher for body-to-body reception

Time: Internalization span of listening

Ability over a time span to reject interruptions and distractions

2) STUDENT SENDING:

Kinesics: Signalling to teacher

Hands up; eye signals, speech signals, body signals

Proxemics: Adjustment of space for better projection

Communication by touch

Time: Measure of time span of communication

TEACHER RECEIVING:

Kinesics: Response by eye reception

Leaning forward to listen

Body reception--nodding, head-shaking, hand signal answers

Proxemics: Adjustment in space to hear better

Reception by body touch

Time: Measure of listening span of teacher

3) STUDENT TO STUDENT COMMUNICATION:

Kinesics: Eye focus for projection and reception

Hand messages, approval, disapproval, etc.

Collaborative reception during lesson or over assignments

Proxemics: Body proximity and body touch signalling

Passing notes, holding out books or other lesson objects

Extra-curricular communication, object sharing, joint activities that link together a peer culture

4) STUDENT TO SELF COMMUNICATION:

Programming: Social freedom in the classroom that allows the student to withdraw and think through his own problems and do self-directed study

Proxemics: Student operating in his own air space even within congested classroom

Images of inner-directed concentration in the classroom

Time: Measure of time freedom offered each student to work out his own problem or complete his own creative work

5) VARIABLES OF MOTIVATION OR BOREDOM:

Positive: Co-ordinated body posture, responding to communication stimulus

Eye behavior suggesting focus of attention

Face signaling expectation and concentration, tonal character of facial muscles

Hand signals of cognition

Negative: Body coordination directed away from stimulus of communication

Body tonus slack and uncoordinated, slouched

Eye behavior suggesting near sleep, day dreaming, out the window

Facial muscles slack and uncoordinated by lack of intellectual or emotional focus

6) EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING OR STRESS:

Well-Being: Physical stance of confidence and command over classroom circumstance

Stance suggesting confidence and command over personality

Body behavior suggesting flow of physical and emotional energy

Eye response and body reactions revealing alertness

Facial and body signals of peaceful adjustment to circumstance and pleasure gained from classroom environment

Stress: Body tension suggesting fear, withdrawal from classroom interaction, inability to communicate

Withdrawal suggested by body slumping, head pillowed on arms, etc.

Facial expression of stress, knitted brows, tense lips, suggesting fear, hostility, or resentment

III. Scheduled Analysis of the Film

With all these considerations in mind each team member studied every foot of classroom film and logged observations on a scheduled analysis sheet including:

General impression of class

Asthetic look and tone of the classroom

Relationships between staff and child

Relationships between child and child

Relationships between child and staff

Character of these communicational situations: verbal/non-verbal

Is the teacher oriented toward individuals or toward the group?

These scheduled observations were inventories of What Is There in terms of visible evidence and allowed us to track systematically the imagery to describe the general shape and effect of Eskimo education.

After the initial film reading was completed, these data sheets were coded and the material transferred to key-punch cards which carried our study to a further abstraction that defined the educational movement from the tundra villages to Bethel and finally to the city of Anchorage.

IV. Use of the Sound Recordings in our Evaluation

Because we are a verbally oriented people, the team found that if the tapes were played with the film, the verbal stimuli drained off the non-verbal sensitivity and made visual reading difficult. Hence a large part of the film analysis was done with silent film. The tapes, on the other

hand, when played as a check against the silent reading of the film, often deepened and gave substance to the judgment of the classrooms. In effect the tapes were explanatory but did not prove revealing in themselves.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EVIDENCE

I. Tuluksak, an Isolated BIA School

Tuluksak was the smallest and most remote Eskimo village in our study. It had been selected because informants in the Chemawa Boarding School in Oregon said it had more of the survival economies than any other Koskokwim village. I found upon arrival that there was no winter trapping going on, except by the VISTA worker's Eskimo assistant. Most of the village was on some variety of relief (which can be jeopardized by other sources of income) and during my winter visit there was literally no activity.

The BIA school was a compound of two classrooms, cafeteria, adjoining multi-purpose room, dispensary, radio room, guest room, and quarters for the teachers, whom we will call Mr. and Mrs. Pilot,* since the husband is an accomplished flyer. This couple had been teaching in Alaska twenty years and so might be considered representative of the BIA school culture.

First to Fourth Grade

Mrs. Pilot was in command of a neat, well-equipped and efficient classroom of about twenty students. The style of teaching was structured and very verbal. The teacher spoke distinctly in a well-modulated voice and kept the class going at a regimented pace. From a conservative point of view, this

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* Descriptive code names have been devised to help the reader recall the many different characters in our drama.

was a very well-taught class that should inspire a budding student teacher and delight educational superiors. Indeed, Mrs. Pilot's teaching was spoken of with admiration up and down the river and in far away Chemawa.

In response to this verbal performance the students were very quiet, though fidgety with what might be boredom or withdrawal. They were well trained in their classroom roles, but looked a bit sleepy and, as students, would be called dull. The team judgment describes the class as over-structured and over-trained in proper behavior, simply because there seemed no variation of behavior and very little spontaneous feedback from the students to the teacher or to one another.

There was an Eskimo teacher's aide who remained very quiet, usually standing back or simply handing dittoes, etc., to the class. I am sure this aide was much appreciated by Mrs. Pilot, but her own style of teaching was so set that there was only limited work of a serious kind for her aide to do.

One variation in the class routine was filmed. Once a week an old man from the village would come and tell stories. On this particular occasion the teacher set up the recorder to tape the story and then for a period left the room. Child-to-child communication changed. Though they were intently listening to the Eskimo story teller, the children formed a warm communicating group, expressing their acceptance of each other by body contact, hair caressing and hand clasping. This began to happen as soon as the teacher left the room.

Later the teacher brought in two Eskimo-made models of forest hunting camps, complete with canoe, meat cache, and forest tools. The children were

immediately involved in the models. But when the teacher took a pointer and began to ask questions, they reverted to classroom routine and waited and watched the lecturing-questioning of the teacher. Apparently the questioning distracted them from the model rather than stimulating them to look into the model. For a few moments the teacher's aide questioned the students; at once they looked vividly at the model and there was considerable communication.

Mrs. Pilot went to great effort to have a colorful, freshly decorated room in keeping with the seasons. There were Spring motifs (even in deep Arctic winter in the month of March) and child-play images: a choo-choo train hauling a long load of alphabets, a cut-out line of circus figures, a calf drinking from a bucket of milk, a board with a huge bumblebee, and cut-outs on a pin-up board of the correct diet -- Spanish rice, bread, butter, milk, and gingerbread, possibly the menu for the school lunch. These were gay images of childhood, but they were not Arctic children nor Arctic environment. One of Mrs. Pilot's survival lessons is not how to keep from getting lost in a blizzard but how to obey green and red stoplights in Anchorage, taught with a full-size, green-yellow-red stop sign.

Visually the shortcoming in this room was that there was generally only teacher-to-student communication. There was no sense of a circuit inter-relating everyone. Instead, the teacher was the center. She moved about constantly, sending messages to individual students. But the students were as if alone in the room, barely projecting to the teacher and communicating with each other covertly or not at all.

Somehow this able and punctilious teacher was not able to turn on this sluggish classroom. Yet, of all the BIA teachers in our sample, Mrs. Pilot

had the most interaction with her village and had genuine friendships with various Eskimo women. She was ambitious for her students to excel, while at the same time discouraged about Tuluksak and the future of her students.

We can surmise that despite the fact that Mrs. Pilot was an outstanding teacher in her own style, this style was contrary to the Eskimos' and that the students became much too uncommunicating and at the same time unreceptive.

Some time later I had occasion to film free-play in the village, and there was spontaneity and spirited behavior. The dullness of the classroom was replaced with delight and intensity.

Fifth to Eighth Grade

Mr. Pilot directed his class with equally seasoned professionalism. He appeared to have reduced education to its rudiments and leaned heavily on workbooks, which is not unreasonable in a mixed-graded classroom. His manner was gentle, quiet, and limited in verbal messages. He moved about the room constantly, briefly answering questions and correcting faults. In a quiet way he exerted his discipline, and the classroom was as structured as the first-through-fourth. He was very relaxed and his students equally relaxed. The research team described this as dull and sleepy. The team feels the students and teacher are just going through the motions. Actually this quiet teacher may have been giving more than the film reveals in terms of education.

The walls of the classroom do reflect Alaska. There was a poster with samples of all fur-bearing animals, pelts glued on with the proper names of the animals. Above the blackboard were cut-outs of Alaskan animals and a

fleet of Sno-Goes. Mr. Pilot is a flyer, hunter, and gunsmith, and probably the older boys relate to him on these skills. At least this was one bridge, and the eighth-grade students seemed genuinely involved in their tasks.

But despite these shared interests, the teacher stands aloof. He rarely sits down with his students and usually is in a state of motion. Our data sheets record no evidence of student-teacher relations, and it was observed that the workbook lessons seemed to require few, if any, responses.

Despite evident competence, here also was a chasm with but a slender bridge -- hunting -- and with a sense of great airspace between teacher and student. Communication signals were very limited. The students did not watch the teacher or signal eye responses to the teacher. They did relate in a non-verbal way to one another. As one observer noted, they "yawned in unison."

The potential humanness in this school was baffling. Mrs. Pilot's kitchen door was always open, and women were often stopping to chat or have coffee with her. She was always simple and cordial and warm. In the evenings she helped run a weekly BINGO game for the interested mothers and regularly held advisory school-board meetings. In one meeting she stressed that soon the BIA might give up its educational function and the village might be expected to run its own school through a school board. Yet in the same meeting she read a long letter from the Superintendent of BIA Education asking whether the community wanted native teachers. She presented the question by assuring them that there were not enough accredited native teachers, so that if they wanted native teachers they would have an unaccredited school. Since the majority agreed they did not want an unaccredited school, this amounted to not asking for native teachers.

Hovering in the background of the dedicated efforts of these two career bush teachers is the couple's shared conviction that there is little future for tiny Tuluksak or any of the other Eskimo villages, simply because dollars and affluence are sweeping Alaska and somehow this progress spells doom for Eskimo communities. In a silent way maybe Tuluksak natives feel this also, and so, together, teachers and students do not have much future to work toward. If there were a realistic future, probably these two teachers would change spontaneously the style of their teaching.

Tuluksak is a community; but is its BIA school a community school? Is the lethargy of the community related to the pace of the school; or is the school the effect of the community? If it were a community school, what could it do for an underdeveloped community? In our recommendations in Chapter Eight these possibilities will be discussed.

The community force in Tuluksak now is the Moravian lay minister, an Eskimo from the Koskokwim Bay region on the Bering Sea. His efforts of community development are expressed in compulsive church attendance and study of the Bible. The BIA school appears in conflict with this church leader and he has been reported to discourage community actions by the school. Hence the school on one very important level is isolated from the community. In a similar way the VISTA worker also ran into conflict with the Church, and found that his community program was quietly ignored by the village -- to a point where the VISTA worker just sat alone in his cabin. As already stated, this is not always the case with BIA village schools; occasionally theyhave added to the community welfare in positive ways -- though likely by circumnavigating BIA isolationism.

I revisited Tuluksak on May third, just on the eve of the river break-up, indeed on the very last ski plane. The world was pools of melting snow, and great cakes of ice were beginning to move toward the sea. The silent winter village had sprung to life as more and more navigable water opened up along the village shore. Everywhere boats were being caulked, outboard motors repaired, nets mended, a canoe re-covered. Muskrat season was about to begin. Salmon fishing was weeks away. Everywhere children ran, danced, played marbles with young and old, played baseball, hovered around the water edge watching winter go out. Boats were finally launched in the limited clear water and motors began roaring as Eskimos raced up and down "to shake loose the ice." At this season it was hard to believe Tuluksak was doomed or had a low ebb of vitality at all. There was fire in Eskimo cheeks and sparkle in their eyes. How could there be a dull school in the midst of such vitality?

II. Kwethluk, a Progressive Village

"Kwethluk is different from Tuluksak. They're very progressive down there and busy. I think they have had some fine teachers there," observed Mrs. Pilot in Tuluksak.

Kwethluk is fifteen air-minutes from Bethel. It is a large village with much involvement with the outside world and a number of career Eskimos working at status jobs in Bethel. In a sense Kwethluk is success oriented and a village of cooperation.

Head Start

Our first filming was of the Head Start school, housed in a ramshackle planked building of spacious dimensions. This was the council house of Kwethluk and large enough to seat the adult population. The very setting made Head Start a village-dominated enterprise, in which there was much expressed community pride. As a model it was a "Village Community School," serviced by the community and taught by two young Eskimo women of the community. Except for a short summer workshop in Fairbanks, the teachers' education was the same as that of many adults who had also gone through the Mt. Edgecombe or Chemawa high school programs. Realistically it was a native school taught by native teachers and a very valuable opportunity for observing the educational potential of community education.

The first visual impression of the school interior was of its drabness and very limited equipment. An oil barrel converted into a wood stove gave meager heat. Long benches and a bare table were the only furniture. On one end was a walled closet area holding supplies. Though the day was overcast, blinding light reflected off the March snow pack, and the room was brilliantly lit.

Wearing stretch pants, the two teachers, Miss Annie Eskimo and Miss Betty Eskimo, were warming themselves around the stove when a father brought in his well-wrapped children for their day at school. Parkas were removed and soon the children were stomping off the snow in the anteroom and running eagerly to join a group seated on boxes around the teacher.

Watching the film silently without its accompanying tape, one would assume that the teacher was pursuing a very culturally determined curriculum,

so shared and intense is the listening. Actually the curriculum was the standard Mother Goose! And the mime gestures given in unison were standard kindergarten material taught in any white school in America. Indeed we filmed other Mother Goose classes in BIA and State schools, but they were strikingly different in performance.

Here we observed the most fluent nonverbal communication filmed anywhere in our study. From teacher to student, from student back to teacher, and between student and student, the class was synchronized and wired together on one communication circuit so visible one could see a communication flow passing through this unified educational group.

First, there was body communication. Everyone was touching everyone else. Time lapse studies reveal synchronization of movement -- leaning forward, leaning backward, holding forth a hand, rocking, swaying as one being, intense eye-to-eye communication, messaging by hand, touch, increasing communication by rearranging space.

For the children this was home, not a school. And later in free-play, clowning in adult clothing, stalking about in adult high pumps, children moved easily and fearlessly. But discipline was in evidence, signalled by a hand projected almost wordlessly, so that the morning passed in a sense of order and purpose.

There were ill children and some upset children who were tendered positive body affection and led to tasks by the hand, sat down at tables with a caress. But in spirit children were not led but motivated to move on their own momentum. A sick child was motivated to join the art session. Miss Annie Eskimo demonstrated the various colors possible with crayons,

and then let the free-style drawing of the child's peers lead the timid student in graphic expression. Art work on the walls was all free style -- collages, cut-outs, and finger paintings. Here was the only art session filmed in Alaska where children were not coloring prepared Mother Goose dittoes.

Our team all rated this class as outstanding. We surmise that three circumstances were involved in this school's success. One, it was by default under-equipped, which drew out special initiative from both teachers and students. Two, direction from above was very meager but empathetic. Ida Nicori, field representative of the regional Head Start office in Bethel, was a Kwethluk girl, so that the relationship all around was one of trust. The Head Start teachers were free to convert the experience into their own language and on their own terms. Three, the two teachers, with modest training, did not feel themselves above the village; rather they felt part of the village, which changed the conventional relationship between teacher, students, and parents.

I am sure they fulfilled most of the ideal expectations of child-educators and the ideal of higher education courses in Child Development, but they did this in response to human function, not to theory. Their confident position spontaneously converted a hackneyed and often deadly Mother Goose routine into an Eskimo story-telling episode. The cultural self-determination sensed nonverbally was a determination of style, pace, and rhythm of the Eskimo way, which might make any curriculum palatable to native children.

Pre-First in the BIA School

Two hundred yards from the village Head Start, Mr. Principal, principal of the BIA school, was instructing a pre-first class, also using the curriculum of Mother Goose. But the setting is radically changed. Mr. Principal is teaching this class in the absence of his wife, who is away on a medical leave.

Nowhere in America will you find a more modern, well-lit and well-equipped school than the BIA plant in Kwethluk. It is technologically perfect, and painted in relaxing pastel shades. But Mr. Principal's large classroom is also shared by the third grade to accommodate another loss in teaching personnel. At one end, third-graders lean over their workbooks, watched by the Eskimo teacher's aide, who stands quietly above the busy students, occasionally leaning down to help. At the other end, Mr. Principal is projecting Mother Goose images with an opaque projector to a sprawling class of pre-first students who are sitting on three lines of low chairs. Reading from a paper, he firmly singsongs the Mother Goose rhymes with his students, some in rhythm, some not, some looking about the room, gazing at the big enlargement of Little Bo Peep who lost her sheep. All-persuasive Mr. Principal tries to turn-on his kids, while they <u>try</u> to sit still and concentrate on Little Bo Peep; indeed everyone seems <u>trying</u> together.

The film record shows very fractured communication. The teacher is earnestly and clearly projecting the message, but the words barely seem to make it over the chasm to the Eskimos. Reception signals are low. Eye reception is equally low. Faces were focusing in all directions -- a few on the enlargement, a few on the teacher. Body behavior was equally distracted -- feet flying out in all directions, some students slumped, some

sitting straight, bodies twisting, leaning back, leaning forward. Mr. Principal's efforts seemed in vain. Each child was a distracted, unreceptive, uncommunicative individual -- till a National Guard plane zoomed down on the nearby flying field, and senses synchronized and for a moment half the class was an intercommunicating group.

We are here observing the same curriculum but with a major difference. One, the teacher is a white man and a stranger, who has only been in the school less than a year. He has had very little contact with the villagers except in his classroom. Two, the teacher was standing while the students were seated in rows. Spacially, inter-contact was all but impossible. The row seating disoriented the inter-group communication that might have been there if the children were sitting on the floor in a circle, with Mr. Principal as one element of this human circle. The result of this disorientation made each child a dislocated unit, and limp because he was not in a current flow of the group. Reception, concentration, and body control rapidly ran out and were replaced with dulling preoccupation and boredom. What if the Eskimo aide were to singsong along with these kids? Would the circumstance have changed?

The next session was an English language class based on a supposedly practical situation. Written on the blackboard in large letters:

Good morning Mr. Policeman.	Can you direct me to the Hospital?
My name is _____.	Yes, I can.
Good morning. Can I help you?	Thank you.

Is this a situation an Eskimo child might meet in the streets of Anchorage? Mrs. Pilot in Tuluksak had an illuminated stop-and-go sign to alert children

to survival in cities; Mr. Principal had a standard educational tool -- a cardboard image of a policeman with a hole for the face to frame the head of the Eskimo child, so <u>each</u> child could be Mr. Policeman. A martyr was drawn from the group, his head thrust through the cardboard policeman image. Looking sheepish, the martyr and another recruit repeated, reading from the board, "Good morning, Mr. Policeman. My name is John." Another child was drawn from the group whose chore it was to say to the cardboard policeman, "Good morning, Mr. Policeman."

Again Mr. Principal used the greatest persuasion -- physically standing the children face to face. Turning to the group he enunciated very distinctly and corrected their responses with gestures of encouragement and criticism. Psychologically, when these gestures are looked at frame for frame, they turn out not to be gestures to draw communication together; rather they seemed to be pushing the children even further away.

We evaluate this class knowing there was great stress in this school. Two teachers had left. It was near the end of a long winter. Mr. Principal was, no doubt, worried about his wife. I was warned the school would be tense; and realistically I had filmed this tension projected into the classroom, tension that was no doubt widening further the gap already lying between school and community. We can't dismiss this as an unusual circumstance, however, for all too frequently there is stress in the compounds. This stress should be expected, realistically, as one of the barriers that rise between isolated white teachers and the Arctic community.

Despite the internal strife, the BIA school in Kwethluk held up remarkably in dedication and educational skill. The stress of the principal substituting for his ill wife does not negate the effort that he put into trying

to make his school a success. The performance of other Kwethluk teachers speaks for the goals of his administration.

Lower Grades: BIA

The first three grades and the eighth grade were taught by Mrs. and Mr. Kweth. Both received a high ranking by the research team. I believe they were equally isolated from the village but were well oriented and disciplined teachers. Maybe too disciplined, but they didn't break under the circumstance and kept their classes on a high level; over-discipline may have been a survival essential.

First grade was taught along with second and third. This demands programming. The classes were scattered about the room in groups, some with workbooks, some with earphones listening to audio lessons. First grade was gathered around a table with the teacher. As one researcher noted, "She camouflaged herself by sitting low with her students." The class was relaxed and not teacher dominated. Communications from the teacher were directed verbally to individuals or to small groups, so that the room remained open for relaxed student-to-student communication. Students felt free to get up, look out the window, talk to one another in a reasonable way. Researchers agreed it was a happy class and an open class.

Upper Grades: BIA

Across the hall Mr. Kweth taught eighth grade. In many ways this was an invaluable filming opportunity. When I set up my camera it appeared I would be recording a very rigid situation -- a multi-grade class of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students sitting compactly behind desks. Mr. Kweth took a teaching position at the head of this large class group; and

because of the way the seating was arranged, there seemed little opportunity but to lecture. And that was what Mr. Kweth proceeded to do, never once leaving his position or asking or accepting any response from the students. Might this be just the approach to turn off bewildered Eskimo students? But Mr. Kweth was not only a good lecturer; he had chosen what turned out to be a swinging subject -- Mental Health -- with a heavy accent on the deprivations of life in the "lower forty-eight."

On film we can see the effect of relevance. As one researcher noted, "Mental health is ego oriented." This must be true, for we have the longest concentration span of any class in our sample. Despite a fairly dry delivery, the class rarely took their eyes from the teacher except to make notes. The level of intellectual intensity cannot be matched by any high school class I filmed in Bethel or Anchorage. The teacher proceeded to diagram the health of Kwethluk village, showed the whole world related to Kwethluk, and stressed the importance of family, village cooperation, and positive human relationships.

Apparently this found sophisticated ears and may have touched the mainsprings of village vitality. Communication within the group was intense. Reception was visually clear from ear to eye to notebook, and there was free intergroup communication; notes were compared, books were shared (a social studies text around which the lecture was composed), and the student-to-student communication was about the lesson, either sharing notes or audio and body communications while eyes were clearly focused on the teacher.

In Kwethluk we had two amazing extremes: first, communication and empathy converting an irrelevant curriculum into an exciting experience in

Head Start, and second, a highly motivating and relevant curriculum turning-on Eskimo students despite a dull and exhausting teaching method -- the lecture. I don't suppose Mr. Kweth has this good circumstance of relevance every day, but this day we have the positive record of what can take place when Eskimo children relate to the message.

Middle Grades: BIA

Later we filmed fourth and fifth grades taught by Mr. Luk; and by combining relatedness, clear two-way communication, and relevance, Mr. Luk had one of the happiest classes in our sample. Only one other white teacher rated higher in terms of classroom communication.

What was involved in Mr. Luk's class? First in importance was a great diversity in communication, on the part of the teacher and, in return, on the part of the students. Mr. Luk used clear verbal communication, explicit nonverbal hand, body, and arm signaling, and he constantly changed, adjusting himself in space to improve and complete communication. He would move from the front of the class directly to a respondent, lean over and speak personally with this student. Other times he directed himself to small groups. Then he would communicate with the class at large. Students freely approached him, drew him to their problems, or helped themselves to materials when they needed them. Mr. Luk switched from verbal to visual techniques, rapidly -- pointing to the clock, or moving hands on a demonstration clock; drawing a foot on the board and relating it to the student's foot.

Students worked intensely, writing, reading, computing, working at the chalk board with visible enthusiasm. This high spirit was expressed in

communicating with each other, by body relating, eye signaling, and work sharing. When tension got too high for some students, they clowned, fooled around, yet were not pounced on by the teacher. In body motion there were no signals of boredom or sleepiness and many body signals projected work involvement, such as body bending intently over work or moving to improve reception from the teacher.

There was a fire drill. The school poured out into the yard. And then an all-clear. The whole class ran spiritedly back to the classroom as if eager to continue their projects.

Around the walls were large art drawings, made by the students, of the history of ancient civilizations, including the Aztecs and Mayas. One felt Mr. Luk had a lively imagination and driving educational interests that were projected to the students.

Tuluksak and Kwethluk BIA Schools Compared

There is a temptation to compare the Tuluksak with the Kwethluk BIA school. The comparison is not easy to make in terms of educational skill and dedication. All the teachers at Kwethluk were in their first year of teaching in the Arctic. They were from a different generation -- knew more on one hand and much less on another in terms of the long-range development of native potential in the Arctic. Educationally this worked in favor of the Kwethluk school, for lack of self-fulfilling knowledge about Eskimos allowed them to work ideally and put out units of energy that would be unrealistic for old Alaska hands. Mr. and Mrs. Pilot had been twenty years watching the ebb and flow of the BIA. If they weren't cynical, they certainly were philosophical about the realistic limitations of village

schooling. They each had a rich fund of historical knowledge and years of living with benign failure within the BIA. Their very insight into history and the Eskimos tempered their efforts and quietly limited the scope of their teaching to what they perceived as reality.

The Kwethluk staff have scattered now. Two, I believe, are still in the Arctic. But the Pilots are still in Tuluksak, no more disillusioned than they were in the spring of 1969, giving the same warmth and day-by-day generosities to their village. In our recommendations we will write more in depth on the potential of the village school and the limitations of "traditional" BIA education, which is rapidly being replaced with "tradition" State education.

III. The Moravian Children's Home, Near Kwethluk

The Moravian Home and School is just three miles from busy Kwethluk, but years away in time and culture. There is little to compare between the BIA school and this mission project. Issues of change hardly stir the Home, other than shifting from dog team to gasoline Sno-Go to fetch the mail in winter. I can't imagine that any change has come to its classrooms for the last twenty years. One of the teachers is the daughter of a founding Moravian missionary who raised his family on the Koskokwim. She teaches fifth through eighth grades. Kwethluk Eskimos speak with respect of this school -- tough training, high standards, no games.

First Through Lower Grades

The research team had only negative comments on the first- to fourth-grade class. The school is, of course, frugal and poorly equipped, but this did not explain the totally drab, brown-on-brown interior of this small classroom, where very young children come to learn. The teacher was friendly but inept, and seemed unable to reach her young students. They sat dutifully, some yawning, all trained to look occupied, though none of the research team felt they were. The film clearly showed that they were simply acting busy. They sat reasonably still, but their eyes were not focused on books or on the speaking teacher. Their focus was dead, non-directive, and sleepy. There was a lot of fidgeting, but always within a safe level so that they still appeared to be attending the lesson.

The teacher was tethered to her desk and made only short forays out, snapping back as if on a rubber band, as if this tiny class were threatening. One data sheet reads, "Maybe just letting time pass." Professionally she appeared as just an unmotivated and poorly trained, or probably untrained, white, middle-class teacher. Communication was super-verbal with almost no other expressions by arm, body, smile, or eye contact.

Only one student seemed absorbed; he was leafing through a book about Eskimos. The class text was the usual dreary white, boy-and-girl story, and there was simply nothing in the room to remind the viewer that this school was completely surrounded by the white Arctic winter.

Upper Grades

The second class, fifth through eighth, was held in a large but desk-crowded room. The effect of the room was more brown-on-brown, with an

American flag, a piano, a few religious pictures, and odd decorations like cut-out bunnies, etc., that in no way related to each other. The room, like the rest of the Home, was anti-aesthetic but clean, well-scrubbed, varnished and waxed. Twenty-five students, boys and girls, young and older, worked at their desks. A few showed signs of stress, as one might expect in a home for displaced children. Many more were relaxed and looked genuinely happy.

The research team felt that this missionary teacher and her students were closer together than most students and teachers in the BIA schools. They felt the teacher was quite secure with her students and that the room had a relaxed trusting air. The teacher communicated verbally, with only a few non-verbal arm signals, and freely drew upon students to act out lessons for the class. Students were receptive to the teacher, and thus one form of education was happening in this school. There was communication in this room, even though it was basically one way. Students <u>did</u> get her messages, listening was real, attention spans were reasonably long. Unquestionably much education <u>could</u> take place in this room. In fact the Moravian Home as an institution has this rich potential. If it fails, then the fault is purely philosophical.

"Provincial" wouldd describe the style of the Moravian Home, and the relating was definitely family oriented, as if everyone genuinely depended on one another. The quality of education sprang from this and set the character of the school apart from the BIA, where the teachers only needed the students to teach, and the students needed the school only so long as they sat there. Here there was no gulf between school and community because the community <u>was</u> the school.

IV. The Alaska State School in Bethel

This consolidated elementary and high school is housed under one roof and directed by one superintendent. Although there is a principal of elementary education and a principal of the high school, the joint effect on Eskimo education is geniunely that of one school.

Eighty-five percent of the student body is Eskimo, so in one sense it is an Eskimo extended community school. The fifteen-percent white student body is both marginal and migratory, with many white students from temporary families involved in Fish and Game, Civil Aeronautics, Public Health, and the BIA. The few more stationary families with school children are school teachers, ministers, town officials, and store keepers. The presence of the white students offers us the opportunity to observe white-Eskimo relationships in education and suggests patterns of school integration where Eskimos can interact educationally with white students. It also reveals how teachers respond to both Eskimos and white students. Is there a preferential relationship? Does the small white minority in the student body make this State school appreciably different from a smaller model of a BIA Eskimo community school?

School As Community

Eskimos are in Bethel for a range of reasons. First, Bethel must be viewed as an acculturation way point out of Eskimo village culture into the world beyond. Second, Bethel symbolizes Eskimos' efforts to meet modern economic change in the Arctic and to organize themselves in new associations capable of extending Eskimo solidarity into the economic future.

Bethel is the site of the effectual Koskokwim fishing cooperative. Federal and state funds run a Job Corps training plant that builds model homes for Eskimos on the assembly line, the first experiment in housing project culture. Modern life styles are affecting the Eskimo population of Bethel.

Eskimos also come to Bethel to pursue education. Traditionally, Bethel has been the educational center for religious training by the Moravian Church. Now families move in from isolated villages so that their children can go through high school without leaving for distant BIA boarding schools.

Bethel has a large, permanent, urban Eskimo population involved in various job occupations and in some businesses. Eskimos work for the city, for the BIA, for the National Guard, for Public Health, OEO programs, Fish and Game, Alaska Rural Development and VISTA programs, the municipal airport, and in all the various stores and commercial undertakings. One Eskimo family has a Standard Oil sales contract. Finally, Bethel has a blossoming relief community with an authentic Eskimo slum.

But Bethel <u>is</u> an Eskimo community variously affected by Eskimo life styles. Eskimo home clusters have the typical Eskimo bath houses. A community hall regularly has Eskimo gatherings with Eskimo food and Eskimo drumming, singing, dancing, and mime-acting entertainment. There is a large active Eskimo Dog Sled Racing Association, and aggressive membership in the Alaskan Native Association. Eskimo groups also carry out traditional salmon fishing through the summer months. Both the Cooperative and representatives of Seattle canneries buy tons of salmon every season.

The School as the Focal Point of Education

All this community environment in one way or another affects the total education of Bethel's Eskimo children. But to what extent do all these heterogeneous community activities affect the school and in particular the teachers in the school?

Education as formal schooling was not much affected by Eskimo Bethel, for in so many ways the teachers were as isolated from the community as they were in the villages. Despite the fact that Bethel is a key hub of air transportation in the Arctic, with jet planes roaring in and out all day long; despite the fact that Bethel is an essential defense hub with a large armory that administers a multitude of National Guard centers; and despite the fact that outwardly Bethel in an Eskimo community as were the villages, Bethel is actually a white town administered essentially by and for white people. It is not an integrated community. Far from it. Bethel is broken down into not just one white compound that could be compared with the traditional BIA school compound, but five equally segregated white compounds, each essentially separate from the town of Bethel socially and geographically. The Public Health Hospital has its wholly separate, self-contained ex-radar site compound four miles from town. The Fish and Game Commission and Civil Aeronautics Board each have their compounds three miles out on the tundra. And the school has its trailer-teacher compound behind the school a mile from the town's commercial center. This means all these white therapeutic, educational, and bureaucratic operations have their walls of isolation from the Eskimo community that can be compared to those of the BIA village school.

Compound culture was constantly reinforced by the growing white specialist population and the nearly complete lack of housing in the town of Bethel. Here conditions spoke of the Alaska frontier with makeshift, unhygienic housing totally inappropriate to the needs of imported teachers, doctors, specialists, and administrators. So, in a sense, there had to be compounds, just as there had to be compounds in the villages, creating the same self-fulfilling isolation of teachers, nurses, and doctors as was observed in the BIA village schools.

Quite symbolically, one major reason not to live in Bethel proper, even when possible, was the town's liquor store, which was essential to the economic well-being of the town through its contribution to taxes, and equally essential to the white people in the compounds who needed both the tranquilization and the escape of alcohol. But at the same time "living downtown" was both unpleasant and "dangerous" because "there are so many drunk Eskimos. . . . Natives just don't know how to handle liquor!"

Probably the most effectual school in Bethel was the Public Health Maternity Center that was located in the midst of Eskimo Bethel. Eskimo women would stay in this clinic for a few weeks before, as well as after, their babies were born. The home and clinic was a therapeutic-educational community directed by a PH nurse who did wholly associate professionally and humanly with Eskimos in this center.

The Bethel school, on the other hand, through numerous intents and defaults, was on the edge of the community. Eskimo children, as in the villages, left their shacks by the river and walked into a wholly contrasting life style designed to educate them for a successful future. BUT THIS

FUTURE WAS WHITE NOT ESKIMO. These capital letters are not a value judgment that Eskimo life style is the only right style for Eskimos, but simply to define an alienation-communication problem that can beset the Eskimo child in this well-run and best-taught white school.

We will report on the school as one effort, singling out only special classes that seem to set the dimensions of the culture.

Kindergarten

Film entry into the school was through the kindergarten. Here a career Alaska teacher past middle age directed a class of some twenty Eskimo and part Eskimo children. Mrs. Kinderbelle was eager that I visit her class. "This is the day an Eskimo always comes and plays for our class so the children can dance." I opened the door to loud electronic music and found an unsmiling Eskimo playing an electric guitar in front of a group of seated children. The children were separated by sexes, boys in the front row, girls in the back row; throughout the kindergarten filming, boys and girls continued to be separated whether sitting in rows or at tables. This was in contrast to both Head Start and pre-first in Kwethluk. One embarrassed boy was standing and supposedly dancing. To implement this, the teacher took him forcibly by the shoulders and propelled him through a series of steps, while she -- still grasping the boy -- stomped and pirouetted to the music. Letting go, the teacher sat down with a little smile while the boy dragged his feet around the floor. His chore over, he quickly returned to Mrs. Kinderbelle, received a chocolate (M & M) that was the reward for dancing. Now two small girls were pushed into the room and, sucking fingers sheepishly, shuffled their feet. They, in turn, received

the rewarding chocolates. This routine continued while the class sprawled in their seats, pretty much ignoring what was going on. The amplified music continued ceaselessly without any communication between the Eskimo musician, the children, or the teacher.

This routine was broken by recess time. Parkas were grabbed. Boys lined up on one side, girls in another line, ready to leave the room. At this point Mrs. Kinderbelle busied herself in a closet so that her back was turned. Suddenly several girls joined hands and began dancing. On film one can see that THEIR WHOLE BODIES ARE INVOLVED, from light springing steps to rocking bodies to faces transfixed with delight. As suddenly the teacher turned, saw the activity, and raised a finger, the dancing stopped, and the kids were back in line. Now the teacher took a position in front of the boys' line, and opened the gate for the girls to go out first. As if with freedom in sight, the girls literally bounded out of the door dancing and gesturing with delight. This behavior was not picked up by the boys, who shuffled out of the room without expression.

The class returned to a mid-morning milk break and as if refreshed by the winter cold of the play-yard, sitting down with enthusiasm to eat pilot crackers and drink reconstituted milk. Again boys and girls were in separate parts of the room. On the part of the girls this was a refreshing change from the earlier class behavior. They gathered round their tables in congenial groups with much communication bodily and verbally, which seems spontaneous for Eskimo children. There were hugs and whispered messages. Then in a melodic unit one table of girls toasted each other with milk, touching glassesagain and again, transformed into an intimate coordinating group reminiscent of Head Start in Kwethluk.

The boys in this class seemed more oppressed than the girls, but for both groups it was vividly clear that these children were turned off and even humiliated by Mrs. Kinderbelle. They were resisting all communication between each other whenever the teacher exerted her leadership.

Kindergarten Music

Later the music teacher, director of the Bethel High School band, made his weekly visit to kindergarten to teach singing. Mr. Music was a tall, lanky man who literally towered over the little Eskimos seated on low stools, again in two rows. Mr. Music was a new teacher from the "lower forty-eight," charged with zeal and enthusiasm. "Old MacDonald had a farm. E-I, E-I, O," was the theme today. With grimacing face and clowning hands the teacher acted out the words while singing the tune in a high nasal voice. The girls giggled and wagged their hands in response and a few actually carried the tune. The boys were less responsive, yawned, careened around in their chairs, while one boy made clowning grimaces himself,directed at the camera. When this boy wandered from his seat, Mr. Music pounced down from above and placed him solidly where he belonged and continued his "E-I, E-I, O" routine. The students looked amused but on the whole just mystified.

Next came the alphabet song. Children in turn stood by an alphabet board; and while the group sang the familiar melody, which they seemed to have memorized, pointed to the "A, B, C, D, E, F, G, . . ." But there is a catch in this rhyme. When the child came to "Q, R, S, And . . ." he would point to the "T". They knew the melody and the counting process, but they did not yet relate the names of the letters to the letters, nor did they realize that "and" was not a letter name. Each time the teacher forcibly pointed the child's finger at the right letter, the melody would break, the

rhythm would be lost, and the child would complete the cycle in a perfunctory, crest-fallen manner.

In this class we are constantly seeing teachers pouncing on the free-style behavior of children, shattering group solidarity and communication. Children are forced into isolated units of one, where children are both embarrassed and thwarted. Children were being forced to do this, forced to do that, and each time the children would slump. We cannot forget the Head Start class with its rhythmic nursery rhymes with teacher and students acting out meanings together. Mr. Music was a very warm, well-meaning and dedicated teacher. He liked his job and renewed his contract, but he was unable to set up free two-way communication in this kindergarten. For one thing there was no way for Mr. Music to understand the style of Eskimo childhood and play rhymes, and he approached this class oblivious that his students were Eskimo.

Two First Grades

Two classes were filmed, and the contrasting background and performance of the two teachers may hold clues as to the character of teaching that Eskimo children respond to.

One first-grade teacher, Mrs. Super, was the wife of the school superintendent. She and her husband are very active in the Moravian Church and live in what used to be the Moravian Mission compound. Mrs. Super could be compared with Mrs. Pilot at Tuluksak, for both women approached their classroom with similar professionality, a scheme of teaching that begets orderly behavior, a high level of teacher direction, and a programmed procedure that is perfectible and predictable.

Communication in Mrs. Super's class was freer than in the Tuluksak first grade but equally verbal. Mrs. Super did accomplish discipline. Students remained in their seats and the teacher would circulate around to them rather than having the students come freely to her. Much of her class was story telling by phonograph record and illustrated from a picture book that she held on high and made a great effort for everyone to see. She also read a story and created a more intimate group than the record sequence. The students remained quite motionless before her in this group, of which Mrs. Super was physically a part. The group could have communicated to each other by touch but did not, nor did Mrs. Super touch the children. There was little body motion, but head focus did suggest listening.

Later an experimental group came from the seventh grade and played teacher. The room was broken down into small groups around upper classmen who directed various number and word games with cards. One ambitious Eskimo girl drew her group closely around her and communicated intensely -- verbally and by eye and body signalling. This student-teaching-student radically changed the learning structure. Not only were small groups formed, but they tended to get down on the floor, to sprawl in convenient perceptive and receptive positions. Space was radically adjusted for ideal communication. Both the student-teachers and the students communicated vividly and appeared excited by this unusual learning situation.

Mrs. Artist, the other first-grade teacher, was a long-time resident of Alaska and Bethel. Her husband had once been a BIA teacher but was now a state representative from Bethel with a vested interest in Eskimo welfare. The couple had four daughters who had made close friends with Eskimos and who danced Eskimo dances with their native friends at community gatherings. Mrs.

Artist also was interested in art and drew and painted, herself.

It was immediately evident that Mrs. Artist was concerned about communication in her classroom. Desks were all facing each other in rows, presumably to increase the interaction between students in her room. Instead of facing the teacher, they faced each other.

The first minutes of film are not exceptional. The class was relaxed, busy, and responsive to the teacher and each other. But as the film continues a number of exceptional elements appear. One, the teacher rarely stands above her students, but works at eye level, very much the way that Mrs. Kweth worked with her class in Kwethluk. Second, Mrs. Artist rarely teaches to the whole group but rather to units of the class, which puts education not on a one-to-many but rather a one-to-a-few and many times a one-to-one communicating relationship. Third, the class did a lot more individually involved study. This means communication between the student and himself. This was dramatized by the class recess, during which a lone Eskimo boy worked on with pencil and notebook, oblivious of the departure of the class.

In Mrs. Pilot's class in Tuluksak and in Mrs. Super's first grade here, children were wholly absorbed with the teacher or else daydreaming. In Mrs. Artist's class many students were wholly absorbed directly with the study at hand. And finally, body use was free, as it was when the upper-grade students acted as teachers in Mrs. Super's class. Body movement was not directionless contortions and fidgeting; body posture was directly related to attention on study tasks or adjusting for better reception. Rodin's "Thinker" rests hand on chin -- a thinking posture. Kids when turned-on to tasks seek similar postures that affect circulation and and intensity of concentration.

Mrs. Artist and her husband began teaching Eskimos in the villages, and she has retained this character of relationship in her classroom in Bethel.

Three Male Teachers: Two Fifth Grades and a Second Grade

As the proportion of Caucasian students to Eskimos increases, contrasting behavior became more evident. One second grade and two fifth grade classes compared also describe basic styles of education that succeed in turning on Eskimo students or turning them off. These three Bethel teachers presented similarities and contrasts that define one major teaching problem -- how to relate to native students.

Two of these fifth-grade teachers were on their first contract in Alaska and appeared not yet to have solved this challenge; the third was a second-grade teacher on his third contract who had mastered this relating. He had taught in an Indian community in southeast Alaska before coming to Bethel.

Mr. Foreman related to his fifth-grade class by assuming an aloof manner that justified distance and could be called "the shop-foreman" approach. "Leave them on their own. They have their world and I have mine." But at the same time he expects his workers to turn out perfect parts to specification. Mr. Foreman's desk is behind his students in one rear corner, as if to say, "Don't bother me with your personal problems -- just get on with the production." His worker-students don't trust him, because there is an air of repression, which inhibits students from communicating with one another, or from peacefully settling down to their work, as if one ear were turned to the foreman, and only part of their attention were on their work. Mr. Foreman feels he is a tough, disciplined man who is treating his workers in a fair, realistic manner. Actually, his position is one of great insecurity. He can

watch the students but they can't watch him without turning around, which makes his desk a spy vantage point.

Curriculum content during the filming was a barrage of questions fired at the backs of the students: "How is a whale like a man?" -- in an effort to elicit the logic of biological typology. Students do not have workbooks in front of them or assigned jobs, so that the teacher's approach seemed utterly defeating except in offering him security. Later, the material shifted to how words are put together -- again, an open-ended, highly verbal approach without workbooks. Occasionally Mr. Foreman strolled out from his desk, up and down the aisles, inspected the students' progress, but rarely paused, and always returned to the security of his desk in the back of the room.

The results are chaotic, with a great deal of fidgeting and a very low communication back to the teacher. Because Mr. Foreman is also a disciplinarian, there is no communication or collaboration between students and there is a sense of confusion that does not inspire independent student-to-himself thinking. Furthermore, with the high incidence of deafness among Eskimo children, and, inasmuch as all hard-of-hearing spontaneously lip-read, this behind-the-back supervision must be a double hardship.

This teaching routine avoids the problem of relating to the Eskimo student and makes Foreman's position one of great insecurity. This teacher appeared dedicated but thwarted, for his position made recognizing and communicating personally with his class impossible.

Mr. Professor, the second fifth-grade teacher, faced his class all the time in a standing position at the front of the room. He used a lecture and leading-question approach on the subject of the geography and history of the

Western United States -- the last spike on the transcontinental railroad, the use of irrigation in the Imperial Valley, etc. Though a surprising number of students do answer questions, the data sheets describe a yawning, fidgety class, many always looking down, with signals of a very short attention-span. Toward the end of class a student got up and left in the middle of the teacher's question.

Mr. Professor's classroom manner could be compared with that of the eighth-grade teacher at Kwethluk who also lectured without moving from the front of the room. Both were on first contract. Both were facing the challenge of relating to and motivating Eskimo students. In Kwethluk, Mr. Kweth approached his problem by genuinely recognizing that he was teaching Eskimos, conducted his lessons on <u>their</u> terms and got a turned-on class. Mr. Professor, in Bethel, seemed unaware that his class was Eskimo, did <u>not</u> tune his lesson to his students, and had a distracted, bored, apathetic class. There were four white children in the class and they seemed normally attentive to Mr. Professor's approach. Both these teachers made much of their dignity as adults.

What happens when a teacher crosses the frontier back into childhood? The film of Mr. Scout's second-grade class was a record of teacher and students sharing a world together. An Eskimo world? Or just childhood? In terms of early childhood education it hardly matters. But, of course, the gulf between cultures <u>had</u> to be crossed, or the teacher could not have entered the children's world.

The sound tape opens with a very high noise volume of children's voices, and the film records a pandemonium of contrasting activities that marks the

end of a class period. Mr. Scout is calmly walking through his students to get his parka from the clothes rack. He cups his hands so he can be heard above the din: "Boys and girls, leave everything the way it is, because I have to go out to recess with you!" Winter clothing is put on, fur ruffs pulled about faces, and most of the class follows him out. But various students stay behind, too involved with tasks under way to stop. Also, snacks must be readied, paper cups, napkins, and pilot biscuits passed around. A busy team is at work, pouring milk, arranging food -- very self-contained and self-directed.

A second period begins with students munching pilot biscuits at their desks. "Now I am going to read you a story while you eat." The story? The Husband Who Was to Mind the House. Mr. Scout settles himself comfortably in a chair at the head of the room to read, with appropriate gestures, this old classic of a husband trying to do his wife's job, while the cow moos and the pig tips over the butter churn. Children munch and listen. Nothing very relevant here? Well, there was nothing particularly relevant in Old Mother Goose in the Kwethluk Head Start either.

In studying Mr. Scout's class we are observing substance on the further side of relevance. The space surrounding this teacher and his class is closed space that contains both teacher and students.

Apparently there was more order and planning than the observer could pick up readily. After the story the teacher directed students, "Now the violet group may work on their story or stories," and the class broke down in small units, violet, green, etc. Each child knew what was expected of him.

There are also single students involved in their own tasks. A long roll of paper is rolled out on the floor and students continue writing and drawing. Mr. Scout moves from individual to individual, from group to group. He leans over, sits down, touches, corrects, and moves on. Students run to him with papers. He pauses, ponders, gives criticism, settles down by another group of students. Studying the tape it becomes obvious that many projects are under way at various levels. This room feels like an ungraded room with everyone working at his own speed.

The teacher appears very relaxed, speaks in a conversational tone, gets down to eye level, and talks slowly to students. There are no signs of boredom, no yawning. Everyone is busy, and the room appears like a well-oiled machine with multiple parts all moving continuously, but with different functions and speeds.

Examining this class as communication, we find every variant means of communicating taking place. The teacher projects vividly to the whole class, verbally and nonverbally, to units of the class and to individuals. Student-to-teacher communicating takes place verbally and by physical contact as was observed in Head Start. The teacher clearly responds. He stops moving, leans down, touches sender, completes message, before he moves on. Students communicate together in study and creativity, sometimes in groups, sometimes one-to-one. And many students work alone, communicating with themselves, self-contained, oblivious of others.

How does this teacher relate? We observed him directing the Bethel Boy Scouts. Is this an empathetic, culturally determined activity -- Boy Scouting? Mr. Scout went through the patriotic routines with dignity, but gently, and in talking scouting made no special concessions to his Eskimo troop for being Eskimo.

But looking deeper, we find that Mr. Scout likes children, and in turn likes Indian and Eskimo children. Their welfare consumes most of his professional and free time. Mr. Scout was eased out of his first job in the State school system in an Indian community because he spent too much time with the natives, often spending the week-end living with Indian family friends. This is very different from collecting harpoons and Eskimo masks. Maybe Mr. Scout does not need to collect these trophies -- the main value of which is that they prove that the owner has made it to Alaska.

White Students in Eskimo Classes

There was one seventh grade general science class that was about half Eskimo and half white. This class is the most confusing in the study, with free projective behavior of students that suggest some concise patterns separating Eskimo boys from white boys and Eskimo girls from white girls.

This class was taught by an empathetic teacher who had served in the Peace Corps and was one of three Bethel teachers who lived down in the village. Mr. Mike's manner was permissive and relaxed, which added to the spontaneous groupings in this classroom.

The film opens with Mr. Mike preparing to carry out a chemical experiment, his desk at the front of the room but turned toward the right hand sector of the room away from the windows. Three Eskimo boys and one white boy sit on the far left by the windows, where it is literally impossible to watch the experiments at the teacher's desk. Two other white boys sit ten feet or more away across from the Eskimos on seats near the back of the room. Three white girls and an Eskimo girl sit in rows to the right of the boys, and four Eskimo girls sit together along the wall. There is a lot of shifting around of white boys, but this is the general pattern.

The Eskimos and one white boy appear to have permissively taken seats outside the class where participation is difficult or impossible. Though the white boy near the window moves during the filming, the Eskimos remain by the window.

The four white boys goof off all through class, shift about, and generally show little interest in the experiment. One white girl shows interest and makes notes, but the other three white girls show no interest at all. One

polished her nails, and one openly reads a sexy paperback novel. All the Eskimo girls seem involved in the experiment, watch the teacher's lips, and make copious notes.

The Eskimos by the window just sit, smile, and look out the window. The teacher ignores their presence, and turns all his attention to the girls.

We feel the distraction in this room and the peculiar patterned behavior is related to the fifty-fifty Eskimo -white student body. The predominant Eskimo style fell off, and aggressive white male style began to intrude. This in turn affected the behavior of the white girls. The fifty-fifty division totally confused the programming of this class.

Special Education

Special Education for deaf and retarded children makes up a separate unit of the Bethel school. Here is a wholly different view of education that puts these Special Ed classes outside the conventions of white education of native children.

There are no special opportunities for handicapped children in the villages; and the BIA boards Eskimo children in Bethel to take advantage of a rapidly growing programming for handicapped children within the State consolidated school. There are four Special Ed classrooms and plans for immediate enlargement of the program, so severe is the demand for such classes.

Deafness is a major problem for Eskimo children because of an unexplained high incidence of punctured ear drums. Infections in babyhood are suspected of causing this handicap.

The research team unanimously rated Special Ed classes as the most effectual in the Bethel sample and felt they held significant approaches that could benefit education for all Eskimo children. This is not unrealistic. Attitudes essential in Special Education of the retarded and the deaf are by necessity directed to the welfare of the individual child. His emotional and intellectual welfare is the issue. Other conventional socio-economic goals so emphasized in public education are of little importance to the disturbed or deaf child. His success as a human being is the achievement of educational development.

With this perspective, Eskimo children in Special Ed get the very attention they commonly fail to get in the regular classroom, where the compulsion to push the native child into the economic system of the dominant society is so great that in the process the Eskimo child can be destroyed as a successful human being.

The class for the deaf and the class for the retarded each has a character of its own, but both classes seem designed to offer the maximum personality fulfillment of each student.

The Deaf Class Experience

The tape of the deaf class has few verbal communications between teacher and student, but the film shows fluent nonverbal relating that gives this class a rich sense of communication. Ironically there is more two-way communication in this handicapped class than in many of the "normal" classes of the BIA or the Bethel State school.

The teacher clearly stated that self-expression and communication were the goals of her class, and that learning to speak English by mechanical phonetic training was not necessarily the most ideal goal accomplishment of her effort. "I want my children to enjoy communication in any medium they can develop." We will look at this class in this frame of reference.

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The room is informally broken up into activity-task areas, where children are pasting, coloring letters, drawing, writing, playing teacher-student in mini-study groups, mastering and using the film-strip projector, or nursing a sick doll in a crib. The impression is that deaf Eskimo children are the most expressive, communicating, high-spirited children in the Bethel school. We go back to Head Start in Kwethluk to find such free-style, uninhibited interaction. As one researcher notes, "Expressive class with each child handling his own space and learning dexterity with equipment; a very human class with a young female teacher never in the way but available to show the way."

Why must we go to a deaf class to find uninhibited out-going Eskimo children? Their abilities appear not to be the result of education, but flowering because there was no formal education. Indeed, child for child they appeared more out-going and intelligent, and to be creatively using their intelligence.

It was reported that in one deaf Special Ed class a teacher went on brief maternity leave, and the reason for the teacher's absence was explained to the class. At once the class stopped all other pursuits and tended to the birth of the teacher's baby. A doll was stuffed under a student's skirt, she was laid on the floor, birth contractions began, and the baby was delivered. Nothing backward about these kids!

The students meet the teacher's goals. They are fulfilled and communicating vividly with one another. They work with the teacher, but are capable of working alone or of teaching each other or studying a phonetic chart under the direction of a fellow student. The teacher works with individual children and with small groups. The sense of instruction primarily seems to be giving momentum to the students and, once they are rolling, the teacher moves to another child. Most of the communication is, of course, nonverbal, mixed with cries of pleasure and pain. The ingenuity of signalling must be in itself very educating.

The Retarded Class

The deaf class seemed intent on teaching deaf kids not to be handicapped, humanly and intellectually, by their deafness. The retarded class seemed equally intent on erasing the handicap of retardation. A measure of the teacher's success was that, on film, the children do not appear retarded. In fact, this class visually expresses more out-going sensitivity than those in many other classrooms we have filmed in Alaska.

The difference between this class and the class for the deaf is that, in the latter, there is more push toward objective education in reading, writing, and dexterity. As in the deaf class there is a wide range of age, from first- through third- grade age levels, which means that the teacher moves from an advanced skill level down onto the floor with kindergarten training for younger and severely retarded children.

There is a free flow of communication between students, verbally loud with sounds of glee, satisfaction and anger, as well as much bodily communication, pulling, pushing, acting out. The teacher communicates verbally in a low tone, and only rarely with an order to "Stop," "Go," or "Sit down." Like the teacher in the deaf class, she was there when needed but took a non-aggressive role in the classroom.

The retarded students themselves are more aggressive. There is lots of physical expression, lots of spirited touch, leading and pulling. The class rhythm was subdued at the start, but, as the period moved on, activity increased its pace with exuberant action, play and running. Shoes were off; and barefooted or in stocking feet, the children began to flow ever faster around and around the room. The teacher took off her shoes and the class became one

dancing-and-running community. There was no sign that the teacher tried to control the pace. Rather, she became part of the pace, so that the class was an exhilerating experience, so necessary, maybe, for these handicapped youngsters.

It is evident that these Special Ed classes are involved in personality development rather than in a learning conformity that stylized most other elementary schools. We ask, what would happen to learning pace if "normal" Bethel classes were as circulating and free as Special Ed? Would more be learned? Would students develop enthusiasm for school and learning?

The Bethel High School

The style of the Bethel High School is relaxed -- even more relaxed than the Elementary School. There are poor, average, and a few outstanding classes -- fewer really excellent classes than in elementary, but this is partly compensated for by a general cooperativeness of pleasant survival in the classroom. The often low expertise of the teachers is forgiven by the students, and the often low achievement of the students is equally forgiven by the teachers. Together they create an ideal climate for one type of development. This is true for the 85 percent Eskimo student body, for Eskimo students are given an opportunity to achieve in the white curriculum simply because stress is low and personality well-being and fulfillment high. We stress the relaxation because, conventionally, students in high school have more stress, physiologically, than in elementary school. Adolescent stress is barely visible in the Bethel High School classes. In Anchorage this situation is reversed.

The white students are swept along on this relaxed rhythm but often with benign boredom and only occasionally do they express their distaste for the provincialism of their Eskimo classmates. After all, most of the white students are as impermanent as the rest of the itinerant white population of Bethel. Many have come from academically superior schools and soon will be going out to the dominant school patterns of the "lower forty-eight."

This view is not simply an empirical impression but recognition of fluent visual patterns of behavior. Body relaxation is very general on the part of both students and teachers. Physical movements of the teacher at

his desk or away from his desk are casual. Students come in and go out freely. Interpersonal communication in classrooms, student to student, is open, uninhibited, and even when interruptive causes no noticeable stress in most teachers. Students ignore lessons, busy themselves at other tasks shamelessly and happily. Even when classes are essentially negative, students sit peacefully. There are few facial signals of irritation, few overt signals of hostility. To us this symbolizes a receptive situation with minimal rejection, which may mean the school has in a non-directional way developed an hospitable school culture. Is this the result of a studied scheme, a concrete philosophy? Or the result of a series of circumstances ushered together by the environment of Bethel? Certainly there were no bitter competitive ethnic conflicts. Forces conflicting with Eskimo well-being are so vast as to be abstract. The white population, broken down in its five compounds, is fed from without, directed from without. This makes its interaction in the Bethel community aloof or amused, and by default tolerant. Only the Moravian Church exerts objective pressure on the Bethel Eskimos, and this is barely reflected in the school.

A General Business Class

Mr. Business is representative of the relaxed Bethel High School faculty. I am sure he finds his tour of teaching in Alaska an amusing interlude but one likely to end soon. His cordial manner on film certainly reveals that he likes his students. His manner is leisurely and friendly in the classroom. His curriculum seems well-organized and task-oriented, with texts and quizzes on his subject -- General Business.

The film opens with Mr. Business seated comfortably talking about transportation and the highway system of California. He likens the California smog created by cars to smoking three packs of cigarettes a day. He gives the statistics of traffic death tolls. "Very heavy accidents take place just twenty-five miles from home." He sketches the function of the American Automobile Association, how to read road maps, how not to park in a tow-away zone -- "That will cost you twenty dollars!" Parking is very difficult in the business section. "How much do you suppose people pay to park in a lot for an hour? Ten dollars? Three dollars? Two dollars? Wrong. It costs twenty-five cents an hour! Now, study the California road map. How many gallons would it take to drive from San Francisco to Los Angeles?" The tape is not entirely clear, but this is the drift.

The research team describes the class as sleepy, and half-responding, though some do respond and ask questions. The verbal approach is given with a light touch, and I am sure such an approach might go over great with California boys and girls. Amazingly it did move the students to look at road maps, to measure and to calculate. Mr. Business was a reasonable, communicating, well-meaning teacher. The class accepted him and were unthreatened when they found the subject incomprehensible or just boring. They would simply yawn and converse with each other.

What might have happened in the class if air-miles to Koskokwim villages, or gas-miles by Sno-Go to Napaskiak, to Akiak, or to Akiachak were calculated? Or jet fuel between Bethel and Anchorage, and Anchorage and Seattle?

When Mr. Business stops lecturing, students appear more oriented to the learning task before them. Students group together, compare notes, communicate generally, and then bring papers directly to the teacher. Sometimes three or four students are at his desk. The scene is better. The teacher communicates, and students' faces show renewed interest. Then the class curriculum shifts to mathematics, and the students work from prepared study material, again making occasional journeys to the teacher's desk. The students seem far more involved in the math than in the AAA or roads in California. When Mr. Business demonstrates math on the board the students really give him attention.

General Science and Chemistry

Does an Eskimo teacher change the pace of learning in the high school? Bethel High had one Eskimo teacher, a native of Bethel. Mr. Native is a smartly dressed slender man, looking very un-Eskimo in his business suit, dark-rimmed glasses and crew cut.

In his ninth-grade General Science class, Mr. Native sits at the head of a long table. One white girl, one Eskimo boy, and four Eskimo girls are grouped around the table as if in a seminar. Ten feet away is a second table with two white boys and one Eskimo boy. They appear detached from the activities of the larger group. The teacher reads from a text, first seated, then leaning over the book and resting on his arms, and finally stands, book in hand, as if addressing himself to the whole room.

The tape records Mr. Native reading monotonously from a text on vulcanology. As one researcher noted, he read "all the big words distinctly but as if he didn't understand them." Mr. Native was a university man, but he did have difficulty making this text alive, since he was just reading it. Lack of intonation and expressive pace made the text hard to understand,

but each student was reading from his own identical text, as if the learning were putting the book to memory. After a bit, the students read in turn from the text in the monotonous manner so common in obligatory text recitation. Only the white girl appeared to relate to the subject matter and, with fluid hand gestures, enlarge on the account. No one else in the class had anything to add beyond the letter of the text, or any feeling to release about the creation of the earth. However, this is a universal theme, and certainly Eskimos have legends of creation, too.

At the other table all the boys are elaborately and very openly doodling, fashioning large drawings that consume the whole class period on subject matter that appeared totally unrelated to the class subject. At one point, one of the boys also reads aloud from his text, but on finishing returns to his drawing. Mr. Native walks over and observes the activities, asks a few questions, and returns to his seminar group. He seems strangely unconcerned what is going on at the table with one Eskimo and two white boys.

Three times the teacher left the room abruptly, and there was a slight change in behavior, more talking together, and the like. One of the boys who was drawing shouted across to the long table. Suddenly the teacher returned. Again, there was little change. Noise tapered off slowly into the leisurely, contained pace that characterized this class and, possibly, many classes in Bethel High.

Data sheets on this class are confusing. There was a question as to what, really, was happening. Researchers are not in agreement over the function of the class.

A second film, of Mr. Native teaching a tenth-grade Chemistry class, is also enigmatic. One data sheet states, "This is an elite class that needs the barest of direction." Another: "Motivated to study because they need this course to get into college."

Compared to the General Science class, we see many of the same features. The students relate to their teacher humanly, and are disciplined in their behavior. But Mr. Native gives very little of himself. There seems a wall of quiet around the teacher that is hard to penetrate.

The film opens on what is essentially a study period. Students are writing up notes and personally asking the teacher about elements of their written assignments. There are three groups, two standing clustered around circular laboratory stands, one -- a group of four girls -- working at a table. There are two white boys at the central table and one white girl. Mr. Native is at his desk looking through papers. The students are all quietly involved in their tasks, writing in their note books, discussing freely with one another, presumably talking about the experiments. One writes, moves to the teacher's desk, and talks a long time with the teacher. An Eskimo boy joins him. The teacher follows the white boy back to his table, moves on over to the four girls, briefly pauses, and returns to his desk.

Now, the teacher leaves the room again and a level of free association begins to develop. The girls at the table begin talking animatedly <u>not</u> about chemistry. The boys at the table move around, and a very relaxed and social air fills the room. The teacher returns, but the general animation continues. Mr. Native smiles on the students sympathetically, opens a text

book for a questioning student, and the repetitious round of behavior continues to the end of the session.

Considering our proposition that education takes place within communication, both of Mr. Native's classes had free-flowing student-to-student communication. And certainly the boys' free drawing could have been a communication with self. Hence, one level of education could have been going well in these classes. Mr. Native did free the classes for their own style of involvement. But what did the teacher contribute beyond this freedom? On film we observed no intense one-to-many or one-to-one teacher communication, as was observed so richly in Mr. Scout's second-grade class. There did not appear to be any special social relationship between Mr. Native and his Eskimo students. In fact, his longest communication was with a white student.

Possibly Mr. Native was very self-conscious at being filmed, though there seemed to be little change in his general mien before and after the filming. Close study of the film reveals a certain ambivalence, possibly relating to his role as a native-born Eskimo teacher instructing in his own hometown. Mr. Native did not renew his contract in Bethel and sought assignment elsewhere. In our conclusions we will consider further this phenomenon of the "native teacher."

Beyond the teacher's performance, we have an equally significant performance of ninth- and tenth-grade Eskimo and white students interacting with one another. There was literally little difference among these ethnic groups. Eskimo and white blended together in one classroom culture, which further illustrates the openness of the Bethel High School, where Eskimo pace appeared to dominate the atmosphere.

Two English Classes

Miss Vista teaches Freshman English, Mr. Poet teaches tenth-grade English. Between them they span a wide range of teaching styles in the Bethel High School.

Miss Vista had come to the Koskokwim for VISTA and spent a year at the tundra village of Akiachak. When her tour of duty was over she accepted a job at Bethel High. Her class was held in the same room as that of General Business, which is set up for teaching typing and not for a circulating classroom with flowing interpersonal communication.

The film opens with Miss Vista talking by her desk to a subdued classroom. Her theme: Words -- what they are and how to use them. Students are directed to create dramas in the class to check the use of words. "Give your attention to the people acting just the way you would like them to listen to you!"

With this introduction there is much moving around, students forming a group in a corner, and the general behavior of the class changes radically. Students sit forward. Eyes are brought in focus, and there is a sense of expectancy. A series of dramas unfold -- rather wild, much running in from the wings, as it were, and hilarious responses from the class. Miss Vista takes a stand to one side of the class, as if turning the period over to the students. Her communications are lowered to a direction here and there, whereas student-to-student communication greatly increases. The students were nonverbally grasping the conceptual verbal character of words, probably an approach that should have been used in first and second grade. The class has five or more white students, and they appear equally drawn into the learning action.

Had a year in Akiachak village sharpened Miss Vista's approach? Later we filmed a large grammar class in Anchorage where no one was drawn into the learning action.

In contrast to this class is the tenth-grade English class taught by Mr. Poetry. Figuratively, and perhaps actually, this is a film revealing the gap between the white teacher and the Eskimo student. The striking character of this class is its use of space. The teacher sits alone on a chair at the front of the room. Two Eskimo girls sit alone in the far left corner. Two Eskimo boys and one white boy sit centrally in the back. Two white boys and one Eskimo sit by the window on the far right. Thus, all the eight students are seated against the wall at the back of the room or directly along the window at one side. "Sitting by the windows," we have observed in Bethel and elsewhere, is one way to withdraw, as if out the window.

Here is a class with only eight students, a small, conversational, group opportunity. But the teacher's approach to the space is as if he had a large class sitting in the rows of empty chairs. Is he unaware that he had only eight students? Is the small group a challenge that can be avoided here only by retaining a safety belt of space between himself and his students? Whatever the reason, what appears as an elite, small, upper-class seminar is run like a large, impersonal class.

The subject of discussion is the symbolic meaning of an English poem -- a proper seminar subject -- over the twenty-foot gap of the empty chairs. Questions are not directed to individuals but toward all the empty chairs. Intimacy of communication is avoided completely. The film records very little communication from the class. The tape records responses given, but

apparently these are given so impersonally as to be almost invisible on the film. The two Eskimo girls are silent throughout. One Eskimo boy in the middle communicates visibly. One white boy by the window communicates visibly. Interaction in the class is a racial balance of boredom.

The Reprobate Teacher

The Bethel High School had its rebel, Mr. Flash, the bearded Algebra teacher. Mr. Flash came from the "lower forty-eight" charged with rebellion and at once sand-bagged his classroom, ready for attack. The principal of the high school was a disciplined, orderly man who liked control. Mr. Flash disrupted the calm of the principal's life.

Mr. Flash despised the compounds and lived by the river with a VISTA worker; his quarters were frequently full of both Eskimo and white students.

Mr. Flash believes in total educational freedom and considers the Bethel High School a prison destroying young minds. Flash set forth to free the prisoners. I am sure the school superintendent also was upset by Flash's war on education, but he harbored as well a secret admiration for dissent and always stopped short of firing him.

Here was Summerhill on the Koskokwim. What could the most revolutionary educational approach do for the Eskimo student? Mr. Flash runs his classroom on a one-to-one level. He despises lecturing in any form and feels students should be free to reject the curriculum at any time and leave the room. No attendance is asked. All that he seeks from his students is integrity of self-possession.

The film opens on a class predominantly Eskimo. Fifteen students are scattered about the room, hunched over papers and books. Mr. Flash is demonstrating a mathematical process to interested students, his back turned to the class at large. During this chalk-talk, three students get up and leave

the room after signing their names on the blackboard. They have left for study in the library.

Now Mr. Flash leaves the board and leans over a lone Eskimo working on a problem at his desk. The communication is intense. In the meantime more students sign their names and leave.

Now Mr. Flash moves over to a group by the window, and the camera records the most intense teacher-to-student communication in the whole high-school sample. Students are equally communicating with the teacher and the conversation is totally about mathematics. More students leave for the library. Finally the room is half empty, but those who are left are not gossiping with one another but are wholly and individually absorbed in algebra.

Suprisingly Mr. Flash turns out to be classical in his approach to his subject, mathematics, and he communicates this field with enthusiasm to his students. But all communications are about math. After from half to two-thirds of his students have been cleared out, the camera records the most subject-involved, intense class in the school. Communication from the teacher is on an intensely personal level and mature in content. He expects his students to be turned-on by algebra, and those who stay are. One of our data sheets reads, "The teacher is into math, and the students are going into it too." The teacher's concentration and interest in his subject have this effect. Students have freedom, but with a purpose -- as traditional as this may sound.

Apparently the students do respond to motivation. Mr. Flash carried the students beyond relaxation, and a few genuinely accepted the disciplined challenge of mathematics. But Mr. Flash was not rehired for the next year....

IV. Postscript to Education in Bethel:

A Visit of Students from St. Mary's High School on the Yukon

One educational event gave perspective on the Bethel High School and helped define both its weakness and its strength. This event was the homeward-bound visit of a group of high-school seniors from St. Mary's High School, fifteen air-minutes west of Bethel on the lower Yukon.

St. Mary's is a Catholic school with about a hundred students and has been established for some time; but in the last few years it has apparently undergone major changes that are having reverberations in the Eskimo community of Bethel. The best native dancers traditionally come from the Yukon, and the area is spoken of as having a special vitality of Eskimo culture. A French Franciscan priest recently took over the superintendency of St. Mary's; and whether it was because of the high cultural vitality of the Yukon or because this priest realized the value of increasing native cultural energy, the school was reorganized around Eskimo cultural determination.

Maybe there is a conflict and competition here in religious proselytization and zeal by differing groups, such as is seen in our southwestern states, where the Catholic Church sees its anchor to be in Indian ceremonialism, in opposition to the more fundamentalist Protestant groups who feel all Indian religious culture is heathenish and the tool of the devil. The Moravian missions made a strong stand on this latter belief and have largely stamped out native ceremonial culture in the Koskokwim villages. The Catholic priest saw zeal and religious strength in native culture and proceeded to introduce bilingualism and biculturalism into his school. Eskimo dancing was taught

in the high school by native teachers. Anthropology was taught on all grade levels through assistance from the University of Alaska.

Now, the St. Mary's seniors came to Bethel to entertain the Bethel High School classes. The event was the triumphal return of the senior class from a visit to Juneau, where they had danced for the Governor of Alaska. Their visit to Bethel was to give an account of this cultural mission to educate the Governor in the cultural vitality of the Yukon Eskimos.

The film opens on a double classroom that is commonly used for such large gatherings. Every high school student is there, white or Eskimo; and all the high-school teachers are there to note the progress of the St. Mary's students. The first observation shows that white students are sitting in a loose group to one side. The rest of the room is occupied by Eskimo students, while the teachers stand by the doors. The St. Mary's students are seated around one long table near the window. There is considerable open space around them that puts them "on stage."

One by one, speaking through a mike, the students address the whole assembly in clear, spirited English with accounts that send the Bethel Eskimos into roars of laughter and bring mystified looks to many of the Bethel teachers. As one teacher was heard to say, "These kids have had an education! We can't get our boys to speak like that!" Both boys and girls from St. Mary's spoke out fluently with beaming and confident faces. The miracle of education has come to Bethel, and apparently we are seeing the practical effects of a culturally determined school that is trying to <u>build</u> on the very foundations that the Koskokwim schools are either <u>ignoring</u>, educating <u>away from</u> or educating <u>against</u>.

V. The Public Schools of Anchorage

The flight from Bethel to Anchorage is two hours by jet. As the plane circled away from Bethel, brown tundra was breaking through the thawed May snowpack. The river was nearly clear of ice in channels of black water. But the mountains southward that wall in the Koskokwim watershed were still locked in the Arctic winter. The journey eastward was over hundreds of miles of Alaska wastelands, for the most part empty of human life, and those wastelands made the city of Anchorage on Cook Inlet shocking in its vast spread of roads and squared property. As we settled into the airport, the white man's world blotted out the North.

Anchorage is spoken of as the largest native village in Alaska, but it is a white man's city, almost completely removed from the Arctic. It contains an effectual public school system with native children comprising seven percent of the student body. These figures are deceptive, for some schools in Anchorage have no native children at all, and many white youngsters grow up here with no contact with Indians, Aleuts, or Eskimos. The Superintendent of Elementary Education was not happy with the native education in the schools. "We believe only a portion of the native children are in school. Many children are not even registered. School is so painful to some native children that they simply stop coming."

With this discouraging introduction we set up to film the same sample as in the Bethel school: from kindergarten through to tenth grade, with a recording of one Special Education class for the deaf.

Kindergarten

In the Head Start class in Kwethluk we filmed a unity and growth in togetherness. In Bethel we filmed compulsive efforts to command learning in kindergarten. In Anchorage we filmed the professionalism of a well-trained teacher conducting a programmed kindergarten where children were directed and gently manipulated into education.

The film opens on a noisy, visually happy, kindergarten class scattered around a quadrangle of low tables in a bright, large, well-equipped room -- "An enlarged playhouse," as one researcher noted. The class included four native children -- an Eskimo boy, an Indian boy, and two part-Indian girls who looked more Latin than Indian -- plus one Black boy, and twelve very white boys and girls.

The teacher in a clear, attractive voice brings order and calls the roll -- an innovation in our Alaskan experience. Then a girl student stands holding the American flag, the class pledges allegiance and sings "My country,'tis of thee . . ." and we know we are back in the United States.

Control, order, and direction set this kindergarten apart from all the other early childhood classes. How will this affect the native students? The Eskimo boy grins with usual Eskimo enthusiasm. The Indian boy sits wrapped inside himself, docile and obedient. The part-Indian girls seem absorbed into the white community.

The film shows students that keep their seats. There is little wandering around, except for one loner. He drifts off by himself to play house. The teacher moves from one program to another, singsongs about

left hand and right hand, conducts dance games to nursery rhymes he calls out. Students stand on their chairs, revolve their arms, stand on the floor, wave their arms like birds. Work sheets are passed out. Students begin working with discipline and enthusiasm.

The Eskimo boy stops smiling and begins yawning and turning away from his tasks. The Indian boy is sitting alone in space, no one sitting by him. He smiles feebly, watching others for direction, and finally dropping off, pillows his head on his arms and remains very still. The part-Indian girls also appear out of the group now, one down at the end of a table sitting alone, one centrally seated close to the one Black boy. The Black boy makes many overtures and, not getting reception, begins to bother the part-Indian girl.

Now a group of white children are all sitting together on one side of the table quadrangle with the Eskimo boy seated in their center. In the first part of the filming he seems to be fitting in, works vigorously at his work sheet, and attracts the attention of the teacher. But the longer the class continues, the quieter he becomes.

A nursery melody is put on the record player. It's time for recess, and everyone lines up at the door in the conventional, separate, male-female lines.

The film of free play outside reveals more structured behavior. At first the Eskimo boy is working in the sand hole with four white children. But soon he leaves of his own accord and turns to single play -- carrying and throwing large rocks, balancing over a series of planks placed over dried-up mud holes. The Indian boy changes his manner entirely. Outside, he is still a loner but aggressive, running, chasing white children, finally manually capturing a white girl and forcibly dragging her out of sight around a building wall.

This well-run kindergarten can hardly be called a painful experience for native children. Yet the two native boys do express an apartness and behavior that is lonely. The part-Indian girls also were not a part of the larger group.

It was amazing to see just the same nursery-rhyme gestures that we had seen performed in a small, emotionally related, body-touching group in Kwethluk Head Start acted out here regimentally by all seventeen students. Here was the conforming style of the urban and suburban school. Would the native children adjust and learn in this different environment?

First Grade

Native children were less visible in first grade than they were in kindergarten. Were they adjusting to the dominant class culture the way white children adjusted to the dominant Eskimo culture in Bethel? Only one native student appeared having difficulties, and the two Indian girls in the room were ranked as high achievers.

This is a large first grade, twenty-five students taught by an elderly, white-haired woman assisted by a young female aide. There are six natives in the class -- one Eskimo boy, three Indian boys, and two Indian girls. One of the Indian boys is visibly withdrawn from the class, never leaving his desk and unresponsive to communications from seatmates. He is ranked by the teacher as an average student. The Eskimo boy and an Indian boy seated near him are both ranked low by the teacher, but their behavior is neutral -- relaxed and outgoing. We assume that personality problems are submerged in first grade, probably also in second and third, and barely visible in fifth grade, as student problems take on definition.

This first grade is a programmed, well-run class, held in order by the professionalism of a seasoned teacher, and it is a class which could have further leveled any behavioral differences. This white-haired teacher gathers her flock around her with much impersonal coaxing, comforting, and habitual gestures of affection. She works with small groups, as does her aide, in reading exercises. The children respond dutifully and attentively, but her teaching is not as directional as in Bethel first grades, and little effort is made to draw out individual students. One gets the impression that there is more order but less learning than observed in Mrs. Artist's first grade class in Bethel; and compared with Mr. Scout's second grade this class is just passing time.

Except for the one withdrawn Indian boy, students do circulate freely around the room to join the reading groups of both teachers, but they always return to their seats with minimal interaction with their classmates. Teacher-to-student communications seem to blow over the heads of the class without focus. Behavior is wriggly and full of daydreaming, though one Indian girl is visibly involved, penciling pages, leafing through books, comparing notes with her seatmates -- behavior which stands out in this class. This alert Indian girl appears not to be getting any social attention but is just turning-on by herself.

Fifth Grade

There were seven natives in this class of twenty-seven students taught by a motivated male teacher assisted by an uncommunicating female. This room had the congestion one might expect in a city classroom. The class was divided and operated oppositionally by the projections of the two teachers' personalities. The male teacher was seated on a high stool by the windows, encircled by students sitting at desks, on desks, and in chairs. He appeared to draw his students to him, whereas the female teacher sat stolidly at the front of her desk-seated students and never moved through the filming, nor did students go to her.

As identified on the seating diagram, three of the native students in the assistant's section and four, including one Black boy, in the main teacher's section. But circumstances had moved students around so that most of the native students were in the head teacher's group, and only two natives in the assistant's section.

We have not identified what the assistant was presenting, but the male teacher was reading the geography of Colorado. The routine was similar to Mr. Native's general science class in Bethel. The teacher read from the text and the students read in turn.

Native students sat close to the male teacher, and there was intense eye contact throughout the lesson. The male teacher returned the eye contact, so that there was a strong sense of intra-group relating. After a few minutes the group opened, desks were reoccupied, and the teacher circulated among the individual students, leaning over and sitting by them in person-to-person instruction. He worked intensely with various native students and a long time with the Black boy in a circumstance reminiscent of Mr. Scout in the second grade in

Bethel. But the teacher was harassed. The class was too big, and many students did not get attention. The teacher was concerned, as if he knew he was unable to give the help that was truly needed. Native children knew the head teacher had a listening ear, and there was almost a pathetic eagerness on their part to be heard.

The female assistant gave no visible support to students, and there was the conventional gulf between teacher and class. Here the two native students responded very differently. The native boy goofed and clowned. The alert native girl tried to keep in touch, follow the lesson and keep cool. The white girls around her appeared to accept her. She looked smart, was well dressed and attractive. The native boy was ignored.

Generally we were impressed how native children fitting into the white urban classrooms. But we asked this same question of white students in Bethel -- how did they adjust without stress to the dominant Eskimo pace? The white pace in Anchorage in turn dominated the native students, swept them along in the elementary grades. Conformity is part of survival. But was this apparent adjustment also obscuring problems that might have to be faced later in circumstances more difficult than first and fifth grade?

The Native As Teacher in the White School

The principal of this elementary school appeared sophisticated about the challenge facing his native students, but the school system had no special programs to alleviate this stress. Teachers faced these problems on their own, for help was not offered.

A St. Lawrence Island woman had a son in second grade, and in a gesture of welcome, the principal asked this mother to show her collection of color

snapshots and tell the class about life on the islands. Here was a chance to see the response to a native teaching about a truly relevant Alaskan subject, one of the more isolated Eskimo communities just thirty miles across the Bering Sea from Russia.

The "picture talk" was held in a series of small groups around a table. In this session the principal, a white boy, the Eskimo mother, and an Indian boy sat on one side. At the head of the table sat one more white boy, and across from the mother sat an Indian girl, a Black boy, the mother's little boy, and another Eskimo boy. The woman had a quiet assured verbal delivery and passed the photographs around slowly, explaining each picture in detail.

The pattern of response was surprising. Reasonably the two Eskimo boys really turned on when together they pored over the snapshots. But the next most involved was the Black boy. He looked very intently at each picture, and at one point his eyes oped wide with wonder. The Indian girl showed perfunctory interest. The white boy at the head of the table showed flashes of interest, then sagged into real boredom. The Indian boy looked intently at the pictures, but frowned, looked depressed and weary. The white boy by the principal handled the pictures but showed no interest.

The Eskimo as a teacher was unflagging, thorough, and attentive to each student with focused eye attention as she talked. She set a voice and body rhythm and retained it to the end of the filming. She gave special attention to the white boys, as if they were the culturally deprived ones who deserved special attention. She leaned toward them, speaking and projecting to them with head motion and eye focus. She demonstrated that a native teacher can do a controlled close empathetic assignment in teaching that matches and

even betters many professional teachers in the schools.

Did this lesson relate to and support the native students? It certainly did the two Eskimos. It amazed the Black child (as another "native"). It moved the Indian boy but puzzled him. It did not appreciably affect the white students, though it certainly informed them.

But the learning situation was excellent — casual, clear, unhurried, and highly personified — and ideal for the disoriented native student. It is true there was no feedback from the students, except for nonverbal signalling between the two Eskimo boys, but there could have been and would have been, had the teacher shifted her approach. After the chaos of crowded and confused students, this was a rewarding moment of relaxed education.

Special Education: A Deaf Class

The culture of education changes abruptly when one enters a Special Education class. In many ways, in terms of native children, education <u>begins</u>. Here teachers deal <u>directly</u> with children. Each student's problem becomes the focus of curriculum, and the goals of learning seem directed toward giving confidence and fluency to each child. The goal appears personality fulfillment rather than reaching a conformity of skills. This was as true in the Anchorage Special Ed classes for the deaf as it was in Bethel. We filmed a small class of six students — a Black boy, a white girl, a white boy, and three Indian boys, all between ten and twelve. The white girl appeared to have special problems; she sat smilingly by herself. The rest interacted together in ways very similar to the Bethel deaf class, though this was a more advanced group.

Film opens on a middle-aged white woman communicating orally and nonver-

bally with a responsive circle of five children gathered around an overhead projedtor. The lesson is a painfully intense group effort in communication, where students try to move from written symbols to understanding verbal meanings in spoken words. There is no representational material to verbalize around. The teacher asks simple questions, as recorded on tape:

T: What is cooked on the stove?

S: Daddy cooks.

This staggered verbal probing is buttressed by fluent hand talk that is exchanged between all the students.

S: Cook - da.

T: Yes, finished.

S: Cooked.

T: Johnny, what does he cook? What?

Johnny: Peetah!

T: Pish.

The staggered, nearly blocked communication of the tape is not reflected on the film. Here we see a class communicating intensely to the teacher and with each other. Visually this class signals more intra-group communion than any class in Anchorage, and with high enthusiasm. The students are asked verbal questions. They try to answer verbally and then write verbal answers legibly on the transparent overhead slate, then try to read their projected writing. This draws in the concentration of the whole class.

We cannot really judge the sense of the questions and answers because so much interlocking meaning is hand talk and general nonverbal communication. But it is our hunch that curriculum is minimal and skill in speech therapy

very high. The teacher is very motivating in her efforts to help the students speak and communicate verbally. But as in Bethel this enthusiasm is directed more intensely toward the abstract goal of communication rather than toward particular goals within communication. Method is to focus learning directly on the individual rather than generally to the class, and the result is that students with grave problems are enthusiastic learners.

In this learning environment there were no differences between native and white students. Their common hardships and equal class recognition welded them into one close group. The research team all rated this class the most educationally fulfilling class in Anchorage.

Junior High School: Eighth Grade

Education changes severely between fifth grade in elementary and eighth grade in junior high. The fifth grade teacher taught individuals. Even within the over-crowded chaos he made a great effort to retain a teacher-to-student relationship.

The opening film view of eighth grade is a shock. Class size has grown to eighty-five students. The teacher no longer sits with his students but stands on a platform above them. He is speaking to the class crowd, never to an individual. Communication is verbal or nonverbal by blackboard demonstration. There is no teacher-to-student eye communication, rarely any student-to-student communication. Everyone seems well-disciplined to watch the board and to listen. Somewhere between fifth grade and eighth grade classroom culture has changed completely.

The film opens with an alert verbally fluent young teacher lecturing from a raised dais. He turns from notes to writing figures on the blackboard -- answers to problems from a past lesson. Then he introduces the

next challenge -- mathematical probability. He outlines a series of problems, and then gives the class time to work them out. At one point he interrupts his lecture to say, "You kids in the back of the room, quiet down!"

The final high point of the session is a practical demonstration of probability, with each of the students tossing coins and recording the heads-or-tails results. The class suddenly springs to life and are tossing coins wildly. The teacher interjects, "You don't have to flip them up to the ceiling to get results!" The teacher leaves the front of the room and watches the class from his desk located at one side of the room, and the students settle down to compute probability.

There are eight natives scattered through this large class. In the early minutes of film all of them seem adjusting to this impersonal circumstance. There is no appreciable difference in their behavior, though the camera was unable to record clearly some of these students. One native student did stand out immediately because of an extremely self-conscious manner. He was listening, but at the same time showed anxiety with a stiff posture and eyes that looked searchingly about him, as if in confusion or distraction.

General class behavior with the beginning of the coin tossing was social with joking and goofing. But as the problem deepened, students become increasingly absorbed. Heads dropped lower and body positions shifted to postures of absorbed thought and quandry. The native students held on with no visible signs of lagging, <u>except</u> for the Indian boy at the back of the room. <u>His</u> head dropped lower and lower. His pencil hand was moving. He was struggling. Now his head dropped <u>all the way in his arms</u> and stayed there a long time. When he straightened there was a noticeable change in expression.

His face was angry, and after a bit his head sank down on his desk again.

A white boy next to this Indian at the far back of the room presented an extreme contrast in study behavior. This student had pushed his desk out and propped his feet up on another empty desk and settled himself in a half-reclining position, designed to give both comfort and a more absorbing approach to his copy-book problem. He chewed his pencil, erased, chewed, scribbled, and gave an appearance of enthusiastic absorbtion with his mathematical riddle.

The Indian boy sat rigidly, not enjoying the situation, and when he did participate, it was with extreme effort as his body signalled slow defeat -- finally sinking completely down on his desk. Indeed, this is a sample of one, but maybe it does describe <u>how</u> a native student gives up.

<u>Ninth Grade</u>

Ninth Grade was held in the same room as eighth grade. It was appreciably smaller, about fifty-five students. Even more importantly, the challenge was very different. This class was not the intensely achieving circumstance that was observed in eighth grade math. The subject was a technical review in grammatical construction, and was demonstrational with a lowered demand on both concentration and cognition.

Film opens with the teacher not on a dais but speaking from a podium on the floor. This was not the regular teacher. The challenge for the class is chalked on the board: "The umpire insisting that his eye sight ws excellent declined to reverse his decision" — this to be punctuated, requring an analysis of the various modifying words, phrases, and clauses. The techer proceeds to ask questions about the sentence structure. Here are answersfrom the

floor and lots of apparent note taking.

A second challenge: "The filling mashed potatoes soaked in olive oil was not very tasty" More questions and answers, though this one was more complicated.

It would appear that if your English had a weak structural background this lesson would have very little significance. On film the subject had little significance to anyone. Hence there was a general distraction and shared boredom that made recognition of native behavior difficult.

But there were patterns in the room. The fifteen native students were bunched together in twos and threes with at least two natives sitting alone in the midst of white students. Native behavior was goofing around. Two Indian boys in the front row were handling the circumstance humorously, sharing jokes with their nearby white companions. Two native girls in the far back rows conversed with each other appeared as non-participants and remained aloof from <u>their</u> surrounding white school mates. One Indian boy near the front on the far right responded with frowns that could be interpreted both as stress and disapproval, but doggedly held onto the lesson and was one of the most applied member of the class. A lone Indian girl dutifully made notes and listened intently with a calm look that might mean toleranne as well as boredom. At the end of the class time she walked slowly through the room with composure and dignity, avoiding and ignoring the students around her.

The teacher pushed his traditional grammar lesson hard and responded, when kids were overtly misbehaving, "I would like you to move up next to Monont, Mr. Christiansen, so you won't have to worry about what's going on

outside!" At other times when responding or asking questions he called students by first name. In both classes teachers were laboring under established school culture, class size, and curriculum. They taught intensely but, in the case of the grammar lesson, with futility. Nevertheless, these were typical circumstances that native children must face when leaving the villages for congested city schools.

High School: Tenth Grade

This was the end of our sample curve and our final opportunity to observe the welfare of native students in white schools.

The tenth grade was as contrasting to junior high as eighth grade was to elementary school and offered us new perspectives. This tenth grade world history class was held in the smallest room filmed anywhere in our survey, thirty feet by thirty feet, with an unusually small class of six native and nine white students. There were two Indian girls and four Indian boys; the remainder were male Caucasians.

The teacher was friendly, out-going, self-confident, and appeared responsive to her students. The subject of discussion was the Second World War. This should have been a conversational class, but it seemed to fall into the conventions already established in the schools at large: the teacher speaker, the student listener -- despite efforts made to overcome this convention.

The film opens with a pleasant faced middle-aged woman standing in front of her desk answering students' questions about the ending of the film they had been showed the day before.

"What happened at the end?"

"You mean yesterday?"

"Yeh."

"Well, the British continued to resist. They didn't give up . . ."

By size and seating this class is ideal for give and take conversation. It is a question and answer class and the tape records continuous talk by teacher and students. But when the film is viewed we see students sitting silently throughout the session. A few vocal white students are doing most of the responding. On film, many hands are raised, wagged enthusiastically, but unrecognized, till arms would drop and bodies settle back into seats. Is the teacher preferential? Or simply unable to handle this rush of two-way communication?

The Indian girls never raised their hands. Many white boys raised theirs, though often they simply spoke without asking. Two Indian boys raised their hands but were not called on. One Indian boy in the front row did speak out eloquently without raising his hand, but his facial expression was angry, and his physical manner expressed defeat. He shook his head while speaking, then pursed his lips, and dropped his arms leadenly.

Not all the white students were involved. There were individuals who appeared as negative as any of the Indians. It was important that there were white "natives" as well as red natives in this class. The whites were covert in their rejection, with rigid, sometimes angry or simply blank expressions, and gave no visible signs of involvement. Their withdrawal was from school, whereas the Indians' withdrawal was also from the white world that is the school; hence their frustration was more bitter.

The Indians began the class with a resigned restraint that the girls carried through to the end. But as the period lengthened the Indian boys' expressed increased discomfort, and their resignation changed to ovrt resentment.

Their manner fitted Harry Wolcott's descriptive concept: "The Indian child as a prisoner of war held captive in the classroom." What can a prisoner of war learn from the enemy, the teacher. The Indian boys in the front row did not give up. They did not put their heads down on the desk like the boy in the eighth grade math class. Their withdrawal was anger and militant distaste.

The view of the Anchorage schools gave perspective to the tundra school in Bethel with its relaxed pace and unthreatening curriculum. Intense effort went into the Anchorage high school. The achieving drive, the pressure of crowded space with its dominating white pace could be an extreme hardship for the native student -- and an insurmountable stress for many of them.

Were native children suffering because of inferior educational foundations? Or were we observing an erosive process more pervasive than the schools themselves Could education offset this assault on personality? Or was education the fatal agent that brought the destruction? Our thoughts go back to the tundra villages for educational renewal. What might avert the native failures suggested in the urban school?

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

I. What We Have Seen

Geographically we have started by looking at the Eskimo child in his remote village on the tundra where his surroundings and all his associations -- apart from school -- are Eskimo, and where the ecology and the traditional home and community exert the maximum influence over the emotional and intellectual development of the child. Next, we moved down the Koskokwim River to the mercantile and administrative center of Bethel, where white-dominated economy meets the ecology of Alaska on its own ground, and white and Eskimo life-ways coexist in their prescribed areas. Finally, we moved four-hundred air-miles east to the modern American city of Anchorage, where modern economy and technology serve to insulate its inhabitants from the full brunt of the Arctic, though its economy is still dependent upon the exploitation of this ecology.

Ethnically, the movement is parallel. In the tundra villages, the Eskimo child goes to school in the most saturated native circumstance, where only the school, traditionally an outpost of the BIA, provides a model of the white world. In the town of Bethel, Eskimos go to an integrated

native-and-white consolidated State school in a traditionally white school culture. The child grows up seeing both ways and their relation to each other; but, in any case, 85 percent of the student body is Eskimo. In Anchorage, Eskimo, Aleut, and Indian children attend a traditional municipal public school system, where these natives combined make up only seven percent of the student body. Regardless of the native population of four thousand, Eskimos here are a tiny minority, living remote from native culture and ecology, nearly as engulfed in the white life-style as they would be in Seattle or Oakland, where school and community are similarly dominated by white values.

In terms of age cycle, we observed Eskimo children coping with white education from Head Start, kindergarten, and pre-first through to tenth grade, with a focus that documents the changing emotional adjustment to challenges of white acculturation that dominate education. We have particularly looked at the changing projection of stress, under different circumstances, of the Bethel school and the Anchorage schools in an effort to answer the question, "What is the most fulfilling learning circumstance that can deal with the physiological problems of adolescence in the acculturation and socialization of the native child?"

II. Conclusions

Conclusions about what?

Effective education? On whose terms are we evaluating? And by what criteria?

Margaret Nick, Eskimo leader from the village of Nunapitchuk on the Koskokwim, framed this dilemma for Edward Kennedy and his Senate Subcommittee Hearings on Native Education in Fairbanks in March of 1969:

> '. . . This last thing I want to say I consider the most important thing in education. Let's ask ourselves a question. A very important question. WHAT [Maybe there's somebody in this room who has a degree in education.] DOES EDUCATION MEAN? Who knows the answer?^ Maybe he knows the answer. I don't know. How can I predict how my younger brothers and sisters should be educated?
>
> I'm sure my grandparents didn't know what my mom and dad would have to encounter in life. He /they/ didn't know how to educate them. Just like I can't predict how I should educate my children. I can't predict how they should be educated, but one thing I know is, if my children are proud, if my children have identity, if my children know who they are, they'll be able to encounter anything in life. I think this is what education means. Some people say

that a man without education might as well be dead. I say, a man without identity, if a man doesn't know who he is, he might as well be dead. This is why it's a must that we include our history and our culture in our schools before we lose it all. We've lost too much already. We have to move. We all know that Indian education should be improved and we've got a lot of ideas about how we should improve our Indian education. Now that we have the information, let's not kick it around like a hot potato. Let's take the hot potato and open it before it gets cold.'

III. The Goals of Education

We must focus on concrete purposes of education or we will be unable to conclude our study functionally. There are at least four objectives involved in the fulfillment of Indian education that we feel must be considered.

1) The traditional goal of native education as pursued by missionaries and historically by the BIA:

   Is education successfully fitting Eskimos into the mainstream of American life?

   This is the oldest and most agreed-upon goal, and is an adaptation of the goal of American education at large. But beyond this traditional goal, and some-

times in contradiction to it, we see three other emerging goals that appear essential for native peoples to succeed in the contemporary environment:

2) The goal of human opportunity:

Does education fit Eskimos to meet modern life problems with resources and resourcefulness?

3) The economic-ecological goal:

Does education support and equip Eskimos to survive economically in their Arctic environment?

4) An emotional-health goal:

Does education stabilize and strengthen Eskimo personality so that Eskimos can stand the stress of life, as all men must, in order to survive in the rapidly changing world?

It will clarify our conclusions if we first evaluate these basic goals.

Fitting Eskimos into the Mainstream of American life

If this goal had been reached there would be no need for this National Study of American Indian Education. The fact is that attempts to reach this goal have been largely a failure. Even when Indians have had the best schooling in terms of white education, success in the dominant society has too frequently been low. The special problems that appear to exist

in the education of Indians, and of many ethnically different minorities, have largely defeated even the traditional goal of academic education. The result is that many Indian students fail to master fluency in English and fail equally to meet day-by-day challenges of protocol and practical survival in the white world.

We should speak here about the rationale supporting the traditional approach to education. "Why bother to educate Eskimos for anything other than entering the American mainstream, when it is already impossible for Eskimos to live their traditional life?"

This issue focuses directly on this study's conclusion, that the continuation of Eskimo identity does not require living in a traditional style, though for many this might mean living in Kotzebue or Bethel within the Arctic ecology. White education for natives, whether they be Eskimo or Navajo, by curriculum assumes that the future of native peoples is in urban centers of wage-work opportunity. The federal government's termination policies for Indian lands make the same assumption. We say, the Arctic is a fine place for an Eskimo future, as much as it seems to be for eager, opportunistic white men. We believe that with balanced economic development the future of Eskimos will be largely in Alaska, and therefore they should be educated to take advantage of this future if they so desire.

A second rationale for traditional education is, "What good is knowing about Eskimo ways for a native who will live in Seattle?" In terms of personality, knowing Eskimo ways has nothing necessarily to do with living in the Arctic. We view knowing Eskimo ways as knowing about self and building a strong identity that is essential even for the native who lives in Seattle. Yazzie Begay, a school-board member of the Navajo Rough Rock School, sums up this issue clearly:

> 'We need education for our children so they can hold good jobs and get along with people in the dominant culture. But in getting this education they must not forget who they are and from where their strength comes.' [1]

Another Navajo leader, Ned Hatathali, now President of the Navajo Community College at Many Farms, adds to this:

> 'The Navaho people must re-discover themselves in this fast-moving culture of today -- they must know where they came from and who they are in order to know where they are going.' [2]

We present a frame of reference that views effectiveness for natives in their psychological, as well as their practical

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[1] Broderick H. Johnson, Navaho Education at Rough Rock, D.I.N.E., Rough Rock, Arizona, 1968, p. 150.

[2] Ibid., p. 59.

vocational, skills in modern life. Our three further educational goals are related to educating the Eskimo not only as a practical outer man, but as a whole and resourceful inner man as well.

The Goal of Human Opportunity

Education for natives in Alaska is detracting from the goal of equal opportunity rather than increasing this equality. Though education makes a valiant effort to teach Eskimos white skills -- to master reading, writing, and arithmetic -- it offers these learning opportunities with one hand and undermines the relevance of these attempts with the other. Thus Eskimo students, instead of gaining human equality through education, too often are convinced by education that <u>their life chances are unequal simply because they are Eskimo</u>; and nothing takes place in white schools to reinforce their confidence that being Eskimo is a unique opportunity rather than a cultural, ecological, and genetic misfortune. Equal tools do not necessarily make equal men. Equality is primarily a <u>psychological reality</u>.

Economic-Ecological Goals of Education

A very few Eskimos gain an improved ecological-economic position through education. There is no focus in schools to train and motivate Eskimos to succeed in their native Alaska. All around them they see white Americans apparently enthusiastic about their own futures in the Arctic; <u>but for Eskimos all</u>

arrows in all school systems point south. Generally education for Eskimos means to leave their environment, which is then rapidly filled by white men who gain wealth from the same environment. In all schools the curriculum is void even of appreciation of life in the Arctic. Hence we can say that education is structured so as to empty the Arctic of adjusted, successful Eskimos, since the focus of curriculum is to make them dissatisfied with Arctic life by stressing values that can be obtained only by leaving.

The Emotional-Health Goal

Missionary schools feel they are educating for mental health by bringing Christianity to the Eskimos. Schools, in general, feel they are adding to mental health by giving youth new values to strive for, by teaching them hygiene, and by raising the style of Eskimo living. Bacteriological hygiene, higher material living standards, and Christian morality are dubious approaches to health of the spirit, when such education cuts across the roots of Eskimo personality. The most generally observed effect of white education for native peoples is that it usually achieves alienation. Educators should be aware of this eventuality and try to give back as much as they inadvertently take away. In the case of the Eskimos, this balance seems not forthcoming; and educated Eskimos, like so many educated Indians, often have serious personality problems, alcoholism, and high suicide rates. Included in our sample is

just one formal effort to strengthen students' psychic well-being. This was the visit of students from the bi-cultural program of the Catholic high school. These visiting students appeared to have durable personalities that had been definitely strengthened within education.

IV. Three Curves

Our second evaluation will be to examine our three curves of Eskimo development tracked through our twenty hours of film.

Geographic and Environmental Significance in Effectual Education

Children in the elementary school in Kwethluk were more motivated than were the children in Tuluksak, which was relatively a more economically depressed community. But the children of Kwethluk were also more motivated and educationally eager than the school children in the tundra mercantile center of Bethel. In turn the Bethel children were more motivated than the native children in the elementary school in Anchorage.

Because Bethel is an Eskimo trading center and the center of salmon fishing, Eskimo culture ebbs and flows in from the villages up and down the Koskokwim and nearby areas of the Yukon that offer Eskimo children a cultural environmental base of operation. It is true that the school largely ignored this potential, but it must have accounted for the high level of vitality in both elementary school and high school in Bethel.

The environmental setting seemed to influence the high school particularly. The older boys raced sled dogs and competed in summer boat racing. Many worked full time, fishing through the summers. Education could well capitalize on these resources that are already quietly adding to the well-being of the Bethel school.

We can conclude that small regional schools can offer a more fulfilling program for Eskimo students than large centers that separate students from renewing a culture that is locked in ecology. St. Mary's Catholic High School may owe much of its durability to its regional setting.

The Ethnic Environmental Significance in Education

Educators have long been aware that there is a tipping point in the balance of bi-racial student bodies, where behavior can change rapidly. Our analysis demonstrated this thesis. In Bethel, where 85 percent of the student body were Eskimos, the low stress was directly related to the relaxed pace set by the dominant Eskimo group culture. The high percentage of Eskimos carried the 15 percent white student body along with this pace. Even the teacher's behavior may have been meaningfully affected by the Eskimo character of the school culture. This saturation of Eskimo style certainly made education pleasanter and more palatable to the Eskimos and sharply reduced the stress reasonably expected in acculturation, especially in adolescent years.

Anchorage exhibited a painful environment where white pace and values weighed down the native students and made life intolerable for some in the schools. Eskimos, Indians, and Aleuts are a minority in Alaska and are officially referred to as "the native problem," a public role that is not one of success. Education has much to gain by working with the natives' ethnic well-being. There is no evidence that this would slow the educational process. Quite the contrary, a relaxed fulfilled student internalizes and communicates better than the rigid, aching student, who has lost his sense of well-being.

The Age-Cycle Curve in Native Education

Consistently in many minority groups in the "lower forty-eight" (Blacks, Mexican-Americans, Indians), students reach a crisis point in adolescence and high school. This is where the heaviest drop-out takes place. And here many minority students are facing their first bitter inequality with the dominant society. But in other cultures, adolescence is not necessarily this period of inevitable stress.

In the Bethel High School, adolescence appeared not to be such an important factor. High school students continued to be relaxed and socially fulfilled in both community and school. There was no dramatic drop-out rate as adolescence proceeded.

In Anchorage, as we have stated, this curve was reversed, and native students conformed to the conventional model. Stress grew higher with each school year. Reasonably, native adolescents <u>were</u> facing the hard realities of being a minority in a

man's world. Many were faced with severe economic insecurities that, in Bethel, would be borne partly by the extended family culture. Thus, school became a greater challenge; and education, for some, became a humiliation instead of a stimulating fulfillment. Obviously, as we have observed on film, white adolescents were also suffering. But they were white and had the security of white success to pull them through. In terms of age cycles in education, the native student appears to have a better chance of fulfillment within his own supporting environment and cultural group.

Reflections on the Future

These three bodies of observations are written about the present acculturation process in this phase of American history -- now! We are speaking of circumstances best adapted to becoming modern Eskimos. When this happens, environmental need of development will change. First we must educate for secure, fulfilled, and resourceful Eskimos. When we accomplish this, the right door to the future will open itself.

V. General Observations

No Basic Differences Between School Systems

Our key-sort cards gave us a rough statistical comparison of the differences and similarities of Alaskan schools. There is basically no difference in the education presented to Eskimo

students by the schools, regardless of whether the schools are run by the BIA, by missionaries, by the State of Alaska, or by the Anchorage municipal school system. In working over the analyses of the film data to find areas of similarity and differences, we found consistently that factors related to curriculum, classroom appearance, educational materials and their use, teaching methods, general teacher behavior and teacher relationship to students in all these areas related to the educational system and approach and administration -- there were no significant differences between systems. Indeed, it would be difficult to look at any class in the sample on film and be able to identify it as being BIA, State, or public school. For this reason the research team often exhibited a certain amount of confusion as to which classes were in which system -- until they memorized the code numbers on the film boxes. To be sure, within each school system there were different sorts of teachers who approached their students in often widely different ways, but each seemed to exhibit the same range of approaches, with no major difference between systems -- only between teachers.

All schools teach the same "White Studies" program. If there are basic faults in Eskimo education, these failures are shared by all of the schools. It is essential to be absolutely clear on this, for many people with varying motives feel that emancipating the Eskimo from the BIA will solve the problem of native education. This is fallacious and hides the true shape of the problem, which is that white schools in Alaska or elsewhere in the United

States have not met the challenge of equal education for the ethnically and culturally different child.

There were fine and dedicated teachers -- and ineffectual teachers -- in all the schools. The material quality of the schools in Eskimo villages is as good as, if not superior to, that of many rural schools in the "lower forty-eight." The schools on the tundra were, if anything, over-equipped. But any superiority was in terms of the materials and needs of American culture, and did not thereby necessarily meet the needs of Eskimo education.

English, reading, and writing are all taught intensely in each school. Teaching skills and methods were familiar and approved; they were "excellent" for the most part in terms of traditional American education. If then, the Eskimos were unable to read and speak clear English, it means we must question how appropriate these skills and methods and equipment were for Eskimos in the Arctic.

We did not observe any teaching of English as a second language, or any other effort specifically designed to bridge the chasm between the Eskimo and white worlds. There seems to be a maddening formula, that the more we "educate" native children, the more definite become their problems of effectiveness and fluency. None of the school systems in the sample could be said to balance out this negativity. Possibly the St. Mary's seniors visiting Bethel may have been the result of an effort to meet this problem in native education.

The philosophy of education in all these schools directs the effort toward assimilating the native child. Nationally, schools follow the principle laid down by Theodore Roosevelt that there is no place in American democracy for two languages, two cultures, or two different allegiances. Education for the minority child has always attempted to Americanize him and separate him from his cultural distinctions. We saw nowhere in Alaska any appreciable departure from this philosophy.

The BIA administration in the Koskokwim suffers with this challenge and worries about Eskimo culture fading. Indeed it would sincerely like to remedy this situation by some variety of "Ethnic Studies." But when faced with action, it has so far backed down. "Why teach about Eskimo culture when it is doomed to be lost?" The Moravian Missionary effort simply rejects the issue and vehemently opposes native culture whenever it competes with white Christianity for the Eskimos' faith and allegiance. The State schools supply their libraries with literature on Eskimo history and culture. It is there if the Eskimos wish to read it. Public schools in Anchorage also have ethnic studies texts in their libraries. But these books are looked upon as social studies. For the most part they are directed toward white children, explaining the strange exotic ways of Eskimos -- rather than <u>life studies</u> for Eskimo personality survival. State schools tend to treat all children "the same," which can seriously injure genuinely equal opportunities for Eskimo children.

The BIA schools and teachers are aware they are teaching Eskimos. Therefore, they may be more responsive to dynamic change, if indeed it were ever to be sanctioned. But we fear this will never happen, not until all schools together face the issue of equal personality opportunities for all children.

Self-Degenerative Effects of White Education in the Arctic

In filming the Eskimo villages we were impressed with the block to effective education that the white educational compound imposed on the village's self-image. It is clear that the schools, educationally, are supposed to make the villagers look about and attempt to raise the standards of village life. This could be a dynamic influence, but we feel the negative effect of this demonstration on native life destroys any positive end. Defeat in education for native children, and more seriously later in their mature activities, produces the weight of self-inferiority that saps confidence and resiliency.

The educational presence of white teachers with their white culture -- the affluent white style necessary for keeping teachers in their jobs in the village schools, whether BIA or State -- creates a serious discrepancy that, in itself, manufactures deprivation among the Eskimos. Depreciation of self is a serious blow to development; and we feel that this disposition, created by the discrepancy that seems inherent in white education, is one of the major causes of failure in Eskimo education.

Teachers and Educational Problems

Culturally, it seems impossible for white teachers in the villages to live in empathy with the Eskimos they are educating. White teachers often greatly enjoy and even admire Eskimos, but the Eskimos' life-style shocks white teachers. Thus, in the villages a teacher's visit with Eskimos is conducted in the teacher's home -- and not in an Eskimo's. In Kwethluk, Eskimo children flooded into the teachers' compound, and they were usually welcome, to baby-sit the teachers' children or just to visit as guests. The wall-to-wall carpeting must have fascinated them, along with the immense size of teachers' homes; and the brilliantly illuminated interiors must have made magazine-reading and game-playing a real pleasure. But how did these children feel when they walked home over the snow to their own small, dark, very crowded cabins?

What should be the role of the white teacher in the Eskimo community, a role that would motivate students and, at the same time, not abet their sense of deprivation? We filmed just one teacher who, we felt, had mysteriously mastered this combination of teacher and equal human being. If this role can not be mastered, teachers instruct over an impossible chasm -- a chasm existing between their world and the Eskimo's world. This is a major cause of the defeat of native education.

It is impressive that the Peace Corps rules out this material discrepancy whenever it can and places its volunteers in native villages, at the same level and in the same style as native students. The VISTA workers in Alaska are also required to live on

the Eskimo level when working in the villages. In both cases the goal is to reduce the human differences.

Curriculum in Eskimo Schools

The bitterest criticism of the BIA schools is that they are washing out the Eskimos' personality. If critics were fully informed, the charge would be laid against all schools in the Arctic.

As an official of the VISTA program for the Bethel region stated, while visiting in Tuluksak, "There is no relevancy anywhere in the BIA schools. How do you expect kids to learn with a curriculum totally unrelated to their lives?" Later, with pencil and paper in hand, I asked him to detail a relevant curriculum for Eskimo children. His mouth fell open, and he was unable to think of one item. A culturally oriented curriculum that would be taught by white teachers is indeed a challenge to construct in the face of the rapid social change that is sweeping the Arctic. But at the same time there is no denying that the absence of a relevant and culturally supporting curriculum is a major fault in Eskimo education.

Our own records, as we have stated, show very few and sometimes no items in Alaska classrooms that would suggest the schools were not in Ohio. The only consistent Eskimo item we did see was an Alaskan Airlines poster that regularly presents Eskimo portraits. In Tuluksak the game-hunter BIA teacher had a chart of Alaskan furs, and his wife had two models of

Eskimo camps, one of which had been made for someone else. At least 99 percent of all exhibited materials in schools were about the "lower forty-eight" states. The only school that encouraged free-style art work was the Head Start school; everywhere else the children colored Mother Goose dittos. In early childhood education, the only Eskimo-oriented text was used in Head Start. In all other schools, BIA, Mission, State, and public, Mother Goose was exclusively the white goddess of education, and in the first grade it was Dick and Jane. One first-grade teacher in the State school in Angoon, which is outside of this report, used an approved Native Alaska Reader. The only class in any school that studied a standard text oriented to their environment was the BIA eighth grade in Kwethluk.

How Effective Is Relevant Subject Matter?

We have just five film samples that conceivably record Eskimo students' response to relevant curriculum. The most outstanding demonstration of relevance was Head Start in Kwethluk. Not only were the teachers young women from the village who spoke to the children in Eskimo, but the standard Mother Goose routine had been sufficiently acculturated into Eskimo styles of motion and pantomime, so that the children responded with delight. The young teachers did not restrict reading to Mother Goose, but, in addition, used picture books and story books about Eskimo life to stimulate the children's interest in reading.

The second sample was Eskimo story-telling in first grade in Tuluksak. The students did respond intensely to this native opportunity and it stirs one's imagination concerning any contributions that could be introduced from the villages directly into the classroom. Mrs. Pilot also worked with an Eskimo hunting-camp model in an attempt to stimulate language use. Even when questioning by the teacher appeared inappropriate, the model did hold great interest for the young students.

The third example on film was made in the eighth-grade BIA class in Kwethluk. The teacher was relating a standard text on mental health to Eskimo life in Kwethluk, which verbally described "cultural deprivation in the lower forty-eight." Though this was essentially a lecture circumstance with only a minimum of student exchange, our film reading describes it as the most responsive class in our total sample.

The fourth example on film was the visit of the St. Mary's High School seniors to Bethel. First, as a group, they were the most eloquent, effectual, and assured students observed in our study. Second, the Bethel Eskimos responded with intense listening and expressions of enjoyment -- whereas the white boys dramatically withdrew in an exhibition of boredom and rejection.

The fifth example was in the elementary school in Anchorage, where an Eskimo mother gave a picture talk on life on St. Lawrence Island. Though the uniqueness of the circumstance

seemed confusing to the Indian and white students, the two Eskimo boys did respond openly; more importantly, the film demonstrated the competence of an untrained native woman to teach, to present native study material in a general classroom.

We conclude that cultural relevance can appreciably improve reception and projection in the Eskimo student, and that most texts and curricula used in all the schools have difficulty reaching, and often may never reach, the Eskimo child.

We feel the issue of relevance in curriculum is an issue related to bilingualism. Both issues are important, not necessarily as means of cultural retention but, more importantly, as means of fluency in communication that can allow native children to conceptualize general educational content.

Native Teachers in Eskimo Schools

We filmed only one credentialed Eskimo teacher in all our sample. Eskimos are used as teacher aides in the BIA village schools but their teaching opportunities are limited.

The Charles K. Ray report on Native Education in Alaska, released in 1959, made no recommendations about native teachers.[3] In the body of the report mention is made of BIA teacher aides,

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[3] Charles K. Ray, A Program of Education for Alaskan Natives: A Research Report, University of Alaska, rev. ed., 1959, pp. 242-243, and passim.

who at that time were considered temporary replacements for qualified white teachers. The Ray report states that, unquestionably, native aides are invaluable for white teachers, but the report also expresses anxiety over their educational ability and stresses the importance of weeding out teachers without training and credentials.

These expressed attitudes are the heart of the dilemma. As expressed by the administrator who asked an advisory school board whether they wanted Eskimo-speaking teachers, "Of course there are no qualified Eskimo teachers. . . ." In other words, education itself blocks the development of Eskimo teachers by insisting that to teach you must have a credential.

Native instructors in the Head Start program demonstrated the competence of village teachers to perform on a professional level with minimal training. OEO gave these young women a summer workshop at the University of Alaska which was adequate to make them the most effectual teachers of young children filmed in our Alaska study.

When we asked a leading Eskimo intellectual in Kwethluk what should be added to the village school, he answered, "I should be teaching in that school." And what could he teach? "I would teach our boys all the things they cannot learn because they are going to school!" He recognized that the schools were destroying Eskimo education essential for survival in the Arctic. The Ray report recommends "lengthening the school year, to include camping experience."[4]

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[4] Ibid., p. 273.

If white education had its way it would absorb the native child completely, in just the same way the BIA historically tried to absorb the Indian child in its captured program of boarding-school education.

Native teachers without college education and credentials in the schools might balance out this alarming destruction of the native child's grasp on his own life and ecology, and offset the hardship of long hours necessarily required to complete school.

Training Native Teachers and Programming For a Culturally Determined Education

We have no illusions about the simple solution of recruiting native teachers and organizing educational experiences to correct the racial and cultural imbalance of white education. Stepped-up programs to rush teachers through credential programs might not be a real solution, because teacher training itself can interfere with the effectualness of the native teacher.

We observed that you can train and credential an Eskimo without assuring the result of an empathic teacher who can build the conceptual bridge between the white world and the Eskimo. Too often the college-trained Eskimo returns a confused and culturally schizoid individual.

Training the Eskimo teacher to return constructively into the village school will require new guidelines and a radically

changed philosophical approach to educating the culturally different child. Unless this takes place, the value of the native teacher is often destroyed by the white backlash of conventional teacher training. When this happens, white schools seem to educate natives to become second-class Americans. The Eskimo teacher returning to the natives can be a harsher critic of Eskimo ways than the white teacher. We have observed that native teachers who wish to help their own people often impose the same harsh routine of education as they were given in the white man's school, for it is all they know in terms of school education.

The Effectiveness of White Teachers and White Studies

In both BIA and State schools on the tundra, we observed competent, well-trained teachers giving all their time to educating Eskimos. Were these professionally skilled teachers doing appreciably more for the Eskimo children than incompetent teachers? The most dedicated teacher can become enmeshed in the web of white education to a point where even his skilled efforts turn off the native child. This was the most disturbing evidence in our films.

Only one teacher in the State school in Bethel, Mr. Scout, seemed to have freed himself sufficiently to teach the thoroughly white curriculum, while at the same time holding out an empathic hand to his Eskimo students. We found even the best

teachers in terms of dedication and training unwittingly, and with missionary zeal educating the native child out of his basic foundations of personality and into an educationally manufactured personality that does not support the needs of the native in school or later in life.

Tragically, we felt many teachers sensed this but had no resources to alter the process. This haunting suspicion of failure harassed teachers in both BIA and State schools, and was a factor of the futility affecting teacher endurance in working with Eskimo students.

My impression was that their image of educational success was limited to natives becoming modern, civilized men embracing white values and ambitions. Their image of failure was the native student who goes on being a bush Eskimo, as if remaining Eskimo were a mark of educational failure. We talked to no teachers who clearly conceived of their students becoming modern Eskimos, standing firmly on their past and perpetuating their values into the future. As Murray Wax observed about white teachers on the Sioux Reservation, "The Indians' furniture was invisible, and in the teachers' eyes they lived in an empty house."

This conflict of life goals in education is no special fault of native schools. It is the basic conflict of American education today. But we feel the time is at hand when these attitudes must and will change. And the most important change

will come in schools. Teachers now can be trained and supported in changing the negative course of education for the ethnically different child. Probably this change will take place first in the inner city before it affects the tundra. This challenge is not new. It was faced and met in the New Deal for the Indians, under Roosevelt. The effort failed then. We feel it can succeed NOW.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Recruitment of Native Teachers

To find only one credentialed Eskimo teacher in the whole Koskokwim region is, in itself, a shocking measure of the failure in native education.

Short-cut credentialing of native teachers in a program paralleling that of the Teachers' Corps is essential and an immediate necessity.

See that there is an Eskimo teaching aide, man or woman, in every classroom -- and that he actually teaches. And make this the starting point of a large corps of trained Eskimo teachers.

Make Eskimo elders and Eskimo specialists a formal part of the school faculty, which would at the same time open the door to adult education.

Set up a pilot program for the specialized training needed for Eskimo village teachers. What do they need in special training?

Phase out white teachers wherever they can be replaced by creative native teachers.

II. A Community School Program

School and community are disastrously remote from each other in all villages we observed. This alone is one major failing of native education.

Build no more educational compounds. Encourage communities to build their own schools whenever possible with State and federal funds. Ease the

poverty-affluence discrepancy between the teacher-school-world and the village-world, and avoid turning to technology as an answer to educational effectualness, or to building programs to compensate for sterile education.

Whenever there is a village organization capable of management, give schools to the communities and encourage their restructuring so that the community at large functions in the school.

Teachers on many levels could be recruited from the villages: skilled trappers, boat builders, storytellers, and makers of parkas and mukluks should all teach their skills in the school. Janitors and cooks and maintenance staff should also train students. The school should be a training plant where everyone learns the skill of running a modern plant.

Shuffle school attendance schedules to seasonal survival. There is no sense in running schools just to accommodate teachers' traditional vacation culture. School schedules should be calendared around berry-picking, muskrat hunting, beaver trapping, and salmon fishing. Ideally, these activities should be open to school students and considered important units of learning.

III. Culturally Determined Learning

Learning in white-Eskimo schools never deals with Eskimo "self" or with group identity. This lack could be compared with dropping from the white schools American history, social studies, American literature, and all programs dealing with American ethics and patriotic ideals.

An Eskimo father with a career job in Bethel states, "I am so ashamed I can't tell my own children who they are." Quite aside from cutting personality roots, this lack of relevance seriously interferes with basic internalization and conceptualization on the part of Eskimo students.

Develop a quick, inexpensive means of reproduction, so that schools could print texts based on local mythologies and histories of each village, to use as reading texts in social studies.

Use this native curriculum program to stimulate creativity and literacy in the whole village. Children should make books, too, if only in ditto, for their own stimulation as well as for village-wide circulation.

Social studies should begin with life in Alaska and stress man-and-nature ecological relationships. This program should lead into zoological and botanical education, so important for the continuation of native life in Alaska.

Hero stories of Eskimos could balance the American-hero education that is often the foundation of beginning American history. Eskimos should see themselves as history and every Eskimo child should be sophisticated about his heritage. We expect this of white children who are educated -- why not of Eskimos?

School curriculum should teach survival in the child's environment. Village specialists could be stimulated to write handbooks, and elders could teach survival, directly, in the school. Survival today also means the outboard motor and the Sno-Go. Survival should be the basis for teaching a wide range of skills to the Eskimo child, for survival today in the Arctic has become almost totally dependent on technology. Twenty years ago Eskimo fishermen were mastering radar before they could read English. Eskimos are fluent in adaptation; and if learning were directed to these modern techniques of Arctic survival, major goals in modern curriculum could be approached with enthusiasm.

The issue of white teachers versus native teachers obviously is not an either/or proposition. The circumstances change from region to region. Some groups are farther advanced in sophistication than others. As one example, Navajos appear ready and able to take a leading role in educating their own children. Not every tribe has the organization or the education to have community colleges or native-run community schools. We simply recognize that this is an ideal direction, in concert with group development, in many ethnic groups attempting to solve their own educational problems.

In Alaska, particularly among the Eskimos, white teachers and Eskimo teachers should work together as a balanced team until, possibly in the near future, individual villages would be ready to direct their own schools with native teachers.

We see a functional beginning of team education through bi-lingualism. If texts were locally produced in <u>both</u> Eskimo and English, white teachers could teach the English lesson and Eskimos the Eskimo lesson. This would present a dignified cultural collaboration of <u>different</u> but <u>equal</u> education. Even where written language is difficult to standardize into texts, and where texts are difficult to produce, <u>right now</u> bi-lingualism could immediately employ native teachers in all the lower grades in Eskimo schools. Dramatized concepts could be expressed in both Eskimo and English, and team teaching, starting immediately, could perfect the child's Eskimo definitions and then move directly into the English definition. Here the white teacher could use <u>his</u> skills to help the child acquire English fluency. This might correct the most serious fault in fluency -- the rote learning of words, but the failure to comprehend or project concepts correctly.

Bilingualism may be, for these coming years, essential for early success in village education. Our tapes have hours of question-asking with few student answers. Was this a language failure? Bilingualism would greatly speed up children's movement into education and increase their fluency in school and later in life.

Bilingualism should be dual learning -- conceptual expression in both English and Eskimo language communities within the classroom. A poor mastery in conceptualization can block the best-taught lesson.

Biculturalism has been mentioned in ethnic studies, but we recommend it again simply because culture is language, and bi-culturalism, which means dealing in the values of both cultures, will also speed up the educational progress of the child.

IV. Ecological and Economic Development

The major frustration in native education can be discerned in the question, "Education For What?" When economic development of native peoples is being attacked by the white man's Alaska, goals for education become insipid and schools become pointless. If there were a rising tide of economic opportunity for Eskimos within Alaskan ecology, there would be equally a rising energy in native education.

White business enterprises in Alaska covet any resource that would make Eskimo life economically feasible. Co-ops are illegally attacked. Special literacy tests have eliminated Eskimos as hunting guides. The Job Corps in Bethel is doing a magnificant job of training building craftsmen, but there are few projects of this scope.

Legislation must be written that protects native enterprises and opens new opportunities for Eskimos within their traditional economy or in the regions where they live. Salmon fishing should be an Eskimo treaty-right -- except for the fact that Eskimos have no rights, no treaties. Canning salmon should also be a high priority for native enterprise. (In Angoon, the native co-op cannery was burned, and the BIA never made one effort to rebuild it, even when the Indians bore a large share of the expense in fire insurance!) Wherever Eskimo enterprises are strengthened, schools are given new energies. If education is only a passage OUT OF ALASKA for Eskimos, schools will never have a dynamic function.

V. Restrengthening the Legal Status of Eskimos With Social Rights and Services from the Federal Government

Popular efforts are to free Indians and Eskimos from the shackles of the federal government. On one level of bureaucratic chaos this could be an emancipation. On another level it is robbery of services and agreed-upon responsibilities assumed by the government in payment for fabulous land wealth taken from American Indians.

We recommend that education be directed toward strengthening Eskimo political and cultural relations. At this time in history, Eskimos have a great deal to lose by letting go their status as native Americans. Cultural self-determination should reasonably lead to political determination. We urge the Alaskan Native Association to pressure the government to keep its commitments of health, welfare, and education for native Alaskans. We urge Eskimos to study carefully any take-over of Indian education and welfare by the State, for the State of Alaska owes the Eskimos nothing, and

when special programs in schools are at issue they can always say, as a federal judge in California said recently, "Legally the State of California is not obliged to furnish Chinese children with bilingual education. Under the law its responsibility is only to furnish equal education for all children." In this case, culturally different children are not getting equality; and in Alaska, in the near future, Eskimos might not get equal opportunity either, since they would be solely in the hands of State politics.

"Equal" education does not mean "the same" education. Eskimos have special needs, as do many other ethnic groups in America. These needs must be fulfilled, or they won't get an equal opportunity as American citizens. At this time in history, Eskimos have much to gain by strengthening their legal status as the first citizens of Alaska.

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